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Despite increasing efforts to restore Sa'ada Anti-personnel mines kill hundreds of goat herders

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Aug. 31 — Landmines planted during the four-year fighting in Sa'ada between the Yemeni army and Houthi loyalists have killed hundreds of goat herders in the governorate, Houthi sources maintain, adding that the human situation continues worsening as displaced residents no longer can tolerate living in tents without any access to sanitation networks.

"In various media outlets, we hear about various local and international relief agencies offering humanitarian assistance to affected citizens in Sa'ada, however, such hasn't actually happened on the ground," Houthi representative Sheikh Saleh Habra told the Yemen Times.

He added that, "Refugee tents sheltering the families of Houthi loyalists suffer unprecedented negligence. Refugees at Anad Camp, which is comprised of 700 tents, are experiencing the worst conditions since the war ended. They lack adequate sanitation systems, drinking water and necessary medical equipment."

According to Habra, the total cost of equipping the entire camp was an estimated YR 25 million, but contractors completed only six toilets that are being used by both men and women.

"Imagine what the situation is like, particularly when we consider that each tent is occupied by five to 12 people. The



Displaced persons waiting to receive food aid from relief organizations

entire camp is providing shelter for up to 7,000 people," Habra pointed out. "The human situation and health conditions are extremely bad and the refugees can't tolerate such conditions."

He urged the Yemeni government and humanitarian organizations to perform their humanitarian duty toward the camps' occupants, most of whom are women, children and the elderly.

Prostitution spreads in refugee camps

"Prostitution – a phenomenon which our conservative tribal community has never seen before – has spread in several camps due to the lack of a male presence there and the infiltration of strange men from the army brigades and nearby areas into the tents. Many girls have become vulnerable to rape and/or deviation or are coerced into prostitution," Habra noted.

Asked about any achievements reached by government committees operating in Sa'ada, Habra responded, "These committees only attempt to satisfy people, but don't care about suggesting

workable solutions to real problems on the ground. The committees aren't responding to refugee's urgent needs, nor are they concerned about epidemics spreading among them. Refugees are suffering a terrible shortage of toilets, drinking water and other basic necessities."

With regard to those missing or detained for alleged connections to the Sa'ada fighting, Habra points out that President Ali Abdullah Saleh promised to

release more than 1,200 detainees from the various governorates, mainly Sa'ada, Amran, Hajjah, Dhahran and Sa'ada.

He continued, noting that the majority of those detained for such alleged links are unrelated to the Houthi movement, adding that approximately 400 Sa'ada youths are missing and the Yemeni government hasn't indicated whether they are still alive or are dead.

"We're still awaiting a presidential pardon to release these detainees by the advent of Ramadan," Habra said, adding that, "Our villages and farmlands were destroyed, while other property was stolen by army personnel and pro-government tribesmen."

According to him, as many as 370 confiscated vehicles and hundreds of power generators, water pumps and agricultural machinery still haven't been returned to their owners.

Asked about the security situation in the war-torn governorate, Habra replied, "We often suffer from anti-personnel mines planted in our areas by the Yemeni army, but military officials have made no effort to remove these mines. We defused more than 400 mines, but thousands more still are planted in the ground."

The tribal leader confirms that landmines have killed 100 women and injured more than 100 more as they grazed their sheep and goats near villages and refugee camps.

Continued on page 2

Yemen's Baha'i community faces problems

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

SANA'A, August 3—The Baha'i community in Yemen is concerned that they are being singled out by Yemeni security forces or extremist Islamic groups after four practicing Baha'i were arrested in June 2008.

A source close to the community, who wished to remain anonymous because of the sensitive subject matter, said that he was concerned about the possibility of the government accusing three of the Baha'is of proselytizing their religion in the country, which is against Yemeni law.

Human right activist and lawyer Khaled Al-Anesi, who represents the arrested Baha'i practitioners, said that the Yemeni security has not yet accused any of them of anything and that this renders their jailing illegal. It is forbidden in Yemeni law to hold prisoners without charges, though it is regularly practiced in the country regardless of this law. "The lawyers are not even allowed to meet with the four prisoners or study their files to know the accusations [against them]," said Al-Anesi.

Al-Anesi did not exclude the possibility of the detainees' deportation without trial. "It is not the first time that the Yemeni government would deport or hand over people to other governments under the guise of military cooperation or the war on terrorism, and then these people can be subjected to maltreatment. Such procedure is against international law and human rights," said Al-Anesi.

He also warned of the possibility of breaching international law by deporting detainees without going through the proper legal measures to guarantee their safety. "Yemen may face international disapproval, and there may be international punishments imposed if it [Yemen] keeps breaching international law," he added.

The three Baha'is of Iranian origin, Zia'ullah Pourahmari, Keyvan Qadari, and Behrooz Rohani, were arrested in Sana'a, on the night of June 20, 2008. A

fourth Baha'i, Sayfi Ibrahim Sayfi, was also arrested around the same time and faces the possibility of deportation to Iraq.

According to the source close to the group, the men were arrested and taken to the national security headquarters' prison where they spent 40 days - most of the time in isolated cells - before being sent to Sana'a General Investigation Department.

Bani Dugal, the principal representative of the international Baha'i community to the United Nations, released a statement on Wednesday that the three Iranians had lived in Yemen for more than 25 years, all have successful businesses in Yemen, and their families are well established there. She pointed out that the Yemeni security is holding their Iranian passports "We have come to believe that the Yemeni government may be planning to deport them to Iran, where the government is waging a systematic campaign against Baha'is," she said.

Dugal called for their immediate release. "Our primary concern today is to ask that the Yemeni government resist any impulse to deport these three Baha'is to Iran - or any other country. Deportation to any country for three individuals with well-established businesses and families for their religious beliefs would be grossly unjust, but deportation to Iran, where they face the possibility of torture, would be a clear violation of international human rights law," she added. Though Baha'is believe in one God, and their faith cannot be accepted without believing in prophet Mohammed along with other prophets, many of their concepts and practices differ from basic Islamic principles like praying and fasting. Baha'is also believe in the prophetic status of Baha'u'llah, who founded the religion in the mid-nineteenth century in Iran. There are approximately 250 registered Baha'is in Yemen and more than five million Baha'i practitioners throughout the world.

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Yemeni researchers encourage local media to promote human rights

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

Aug. 30- Yemeni researchers have confirmed that the role of mass media is no longer confined to simply performing their classic task of reporting news. Their role should include other, just as important duties, such as observing the activities of government authorities, organizations, groups and individuals.

Mass media should play an important role in maintaining democracy, by disenabling the ruling majority from violating the rights of party minorities. In addition, journalists should undertake to disclose fiscal, management and political corruption, that both junior and senior officials practice.

In the symposium organized by the Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights, participants emphatically

stressed the correlation between the roles of mass media and human rights organizations, pointing out that mass media should play an important part in promoting human rights and raising people's awareness of these rights. They said that mass media should disclose all violations against human rights, address public opinion and stand firm in front of any violation against journalists. In addition to clarifying ways of confronting these violations, they should employ media outlets to form public opinion and to advocate for human rights on the national, regional and international levels.

However, researchers have produced a study showing that it is currently very difficult to realize full complementation between mass media and human

rights organizations because of three main reasons.

The first factor is that the concept of "human rights", in its modern sense, is seen by many as a means of Western invasion against Arab and Islamic nations as well as political extortion against their regimes and people, in a way that achieves Western interests and intentions in the whole region.

The second reason is Yemen's backwardness, particularly in the media field which is technically and professionally weak. In addition, mass media are still overwhelmingly controlled by the government.

The third factor is that human rights movements in Yemen have been concentrating on political rights and, to some extent, civic rights in their activities, but have so far been neglecting

economic, social and cultural rights.

In their studies presented during the symposium, researchers discussed the obstacles that restrain the proper performance of journalists. Among these obstacles are:

- Poverty and poor living standards since a journalist's salary is on average \$100 per month
- Lack of qualification and training
- Poor legal and human rights awareness
- Intimidation and violation of journalists' rights during duty
- Denial of journalists' material and moral rights in the newspapers and institutions where they work
- Continued organized dominance in mass media due to poverty and joblessness

Participants of the symposium recommended that national legislative measures related to media and publication be demanded, and that they be guaranteed by international charters and agreements. They also stressed the importance of breaking the chains that hinder press publication and freedom of opinion. They declared that journalists should not be imprisoned for publishing opinion pieces, pointing out that all forms of monitoring and control over mass media and publication should be eradicated in a way that ensures they are able to perform their job independently.

Additionally, participants highlighted the importance of disseminating international human rights standards and principles, according to the related human rights charters, declarations and conventions. They further emphasized

the need for dialogue between all members of society in order to enable individuals to play their roles in the human rights' field.

Finally, participants recommended coordination between human rights organizations and the media in order to improve the latter's mission to spread the principles of human rights among all groups of society, adding that all possible means that enhance the role of mass media in the field of human rights, including new technology and training programs, should be employed to do so. The Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights is an independent non-governmental organization established mid 2004. It is concerned with human rights and democracy as well as the different political, social, economic and cultural issues facing Yemeni society.

Findings of a new study on journalism trends in Yemen

SANA'A, Aug. 27 - A study on journalism trends in print media by Abdulmalik Al-Danani, head of Sana'a University's journalism college, reveals that journalists believe Yemeni media has a long way to go before being considered a true public opinion power.

The study, which was designed as a qualitative survey sampling the opinions of 30 Yemeni journalists from various affiliations, covered seven areas: popular newspapers, the power of print media, the role of media, lack of professionalism, the media's message, censorship and freedom of expression.

Of those surveyed, 38 percent said they preferred reading political party newspapers, while 19 percent preferred independent newspapers. Around 33 percent preferred official newspapers, particularly Al-Thawrah, and 10 percent couldn't make up their minds.

Regarding the power of print media, 60 percent of the sample believed that political party newspapers create public opinion, while 67 percent said official newspapers don't. Less than 30

percent thought independent newspapers are able to create public opinion and pressure decision makers.

A majority of the journalists agreed that limits to freedom of expression, particularly regarding media law, have disabled the print media and prevented it from playing its role in society. Some complained about bureaucracy at their own newspapers and control by their editors-in-chief.

Some of the journalists sampled also indicated that there isn't much respect for print journalism due to lack of professionalism and unethical behavior by some journalists.

Sixty percent agreed that low wages and poor financial conditions cause journalists to neglect their duties and seek other means of income.

All of the journalists surveyed had an opinion about print media coverage of political, social, economic and development issues. Many noted that newspapers - even independent ones - are extremely politicized, while only 14 percent said newspapers help Yemen's development and awareness.

Many journalists desired better conditions regarding freedom of expression, complaining of tight control by editors and authorities. However, some did admit that a few journalists and "yellow journalism" newspapers abuse freedom of expression to print unethical articles.

Some expressed concerns about harassments and violations against journalists, while others denied any such abuse, with 17 percent claiming that there's no such thing as journalists being assaulted in Yemen because it is a democratic country.

In conclusion, the study recommended amending the Media Law and eliminating those articles that imprison journalists for doing their job. It also advised endorsing and strengthening the role of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate and committing journalists to a code of ethics.

Finally, it urged Yemen's Information Ministry to support journalists and their causes and help generate better economic conditions and higher pay.

Working children showcase their visual art and performance talents

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

Sana'a, August 27 - About 250 student laborers at the Working Children Rehabilitation Center in Sana'a celebrated the completion of their summer program with a show and art exhibition this past Wednesday.

The Working Children Rehabilitation Center was established in 2003. It targets the working children who labor in all kinds of fields and rehabilitates them through education. The students showed off their talents in different types of visual arts and performance.

"The center helped me to continue my studies and in addition to sports, scouting and art activities there are at the center, we also receive school uniforms, backpacks, clothing for Eid and health services," said Mohammed Sa'ad, 14 years old, who came back to school two years after dropping out to work.

According to Safiyah Al-Sa'eedi, the Director of the Working Children's Rehabilitation Center, child laborers come from families who couldn't afford essentials for their children. "We rehabilitate children and fix their behavior by making a change in their lives; we let them practice their favorite hobbies and things they were forbidden to do due to their work like music, sports, sculpture or drawing," said Al-Sa'eedi.

"The suffering these children face in their lives increases their creativity, so we try to give them a chance to show their talents and polish their skills," Al-Sa'eedi added.

During the end-of-term celebration, the former and current child laborers presented a number of performances that included singing, dancing and acting. They sang songs that referenced their lives on streets. They also sang about Yemen and about the communi-



Child laborers put on play at the Working Children Rehabilitation Program

ties they live in, asking for a stop to child labor and an increase in children's rights. They also presented a short sketch that dealt with their daily suffering that re-affirmed the importance of school for all children including those who work.

"In this center I draw, sing and study," said Intasar Al-Serahi, 13 years old, who worked as a door-to-door salesperson. "I like acting and I like to about learn first-aid because I want to be a doctor when I grow up."

In the center's yard, the children exhibited their art work for visitors. There were colorful paintings and jars, sculptured mosques and scenes like Bab Al-Yemen, all of which showed the creative talents and imagination of the children.

Bassam Al-Azizi, 16 years old, stood next to his drawing proudly. "I practice drawing, sculpture and soccer, and I have been in this center for four years - I like it," he said confidently. In 2005, Al-Azizi participated in the

Tripoli International Drawing Competition for Children and won the second prize.

"The working children don't find time for playing and practicing their hobbies like other children. They become adults before their time," said Seham Al-Mekhlafi, a teacher at the center.

"500 children is the average number of students coming to the center each week," said Al-Sa'eedi. "Besides other recreational and cultural activities, we also provide students with lessons in Arabic and mathematics to help them in their [regular] schools."

The Working Children Rehabilitation Center produced an album of children's songs by the center's student choir group. All the songs are about child labor and promoting children's rights to get education. The CD is currently available for sale at the center, though they are also looking for someone to help them market it as well on a broader scale.

Al-Qaeda leader in Yemen: "Security measures harm the government, not us"

SANA'A, August 30 - The head of Al-Qaeda in Yemen, Abu Osama, said that Al-Qaeda still has plans to execute operations all over the country, including in Sana'a. Abu Osama, who is the successor to Hamzah Al-Quaiti, is part of the armed wing of the Jund Al-Yemen Battalions, a group that claims to represent Al-Qaeda in Yemen.

The possibility of new attacks was mentioned in an exclusive interview Abu Osama gave to Yemen's Al-Wasat newspaper through another member of the Jund Al-Yemen Battalions who acted as an intermediary.

In the interview, Abu Osama criticized the government's security measures as futile. "Due to security precautions, the government and investments were harmed, security was unsettled and the economy deteriorated. This harms the authorities and in turn, increases our stability," said Abu Osama, whose real name was not revealed in the article.

Asked if Al-Qaeda chose Hadramout to carry out their attacks because the government had heightened security in and around Sana'a, Abu Osama said that "Hadramout is one of the government's arteries in terms of oil and because it is a coastal and investment [oriented] governorate, so we want to cut that artery."

He added that the governments' security situation was clearly deteriorating as evidenced by the extra security forces at checkpoints.

Abu Osama also denied the surrender and arrest of several Al-Qaeda followers in the Ji'ar region of Abyan governorate. He said that the government considers shop-

keepers who sell food to Al-Qaeda youth, owners of restaurants and bus drivers who deal with Al-Qaeda as Al-Qaeda elements and based on that, states that it allegedly arrested a group of "terrorists."

"All I know is that only one person affiliated with us surrendered voluntarily according to pre [determined] conditions he made," he said.

Concerning Thabit Al-Qahtani who is believed to be in Yemen and planning to carry out attacks in Saudi Arabia, Abu Osama confirmed that Al-Qahtani is in Yemen but he refused to talk about whether he plans to carry out attacks in Saudi Arabia. "I don't have the authority to talk about operations in the Land of the Two Mosques," he said.

He confirmed that Western interests are a target along with army and security forces. "We don't target them until after a warning has been issued," said Abu Osama. He added that he thinks the Yemeni government "fights under the flag of America" and hence deserve any attacks that the group launches inside the country.

When asked about mediation efforts between the government and Al-Qaeda, he said that mediation hasn't brought about any agreements. "There were mediation committees but all of them reached an impasse," said Abu Osama. "Brothers such as Jaber Al-Banna and Jamal Al-Badawi who surrendered themselves through these committees were taken to jail, as the government broke its commitment." Abu Osama told Al-Wasat that the last message his group had received from President Saleh was that there was nothing

between the two sides except bullets. "We replied that we are capable and that the real reply is what you will see."

Abu Osama also admitted that there is difficulty in liaison between Al-Qaeda cells and leaders. "We exist in 80 regions in Yemen" he said. However, he added, "We have regions to resort to [in order to] re-gather our cells and declare resistance."

The Saudi-based Al-Watan newspaper previously reported that Nayf Mohammed Al-Qahtani, known as Abi Hamam, manages Al-Qaeda operations in Yemen, maintaining that he has been in Yemen for about a year and receives financial support from Iranians and Libyans to carry out operations targeting Yemen and Saudi Arabia. He further serves as a liaison officer for Al-Qaeda cells in the two countries.

The newspaper said that sources confirmed that Al-Qahtani supplies many terrorist attacks targeting Yemeni structures such as the attack that killed a number of Spanish tourists in 2007. Al-Qahtani is thought to be entrenched in a mountainous shelter near the Abeada tribe's region near the Saudi -Yemeni border.

"Investigations are on track with Mohsen Al-Akiri and Mohammed Ba Awaidhan who are members of Tarim cell," quoted Al-Watan newspaper. "They were arrested in Tarim (a city in Hadramout governorate) after they were injured," reported the newspaper, which revealed details about the plan that Al-Qaeda aimed to carry out in Yemen and Saudi Arabia against oil, tourist and economic constructions.

Al-Khameri said that President Ali Abdullah Saleh assigned various sheikhs from Bani Dhabyan tribe to help solve the problem and release his son. "The sheikhs persuade the kidnappers and threatened them that the government will send a big campaign against them and then they responded to the sheikhs and released my son," said Al-Khameri.

Though his son was released on Thursday, Al-Khameri maintains that the government should prosecute his son's kidnappers. Al-Khameri said he will first try to bring the kidnappers to justice in Yemen, but is has alternatives if this

By: Almidgad Mojalli

SANA'A, August 31 - Yemeni businessman Tawfiq Al-Khameri denied that he entered tribal arbitration or offered any ransom to kidnappers to obtain the release of his 17-year-old son Omer Al-Khameri who was kidnapped by members of the Bani Dhabyan tribe one month ago and was released last Thursday.

Al-Khameri said that President Ali Abdullah Saleh assigned various sheikhs from Bani Dhabyan tribe to help solve the problem and release his son. "The sheikhs persuade the kidnappers and threatened them that the government will send a big campaign against them and then they responded to the sheikhs and released my son," said Al-Khameri.

Though his son was released on Thursday, Al-Khameri maintains that the government should prosecute his son's kidnappers.

Al-Khameri said he will first try to bring the kidnappers to justice in Yemen, but is has alternatives if this

isn't possible. "If the Yemeni judiciary doesn't make a just judgment for me, I will take it [the case] to the international judiciary," he said.

Al-Khameri said that he has the names and photos of the kidnappers and will not only take them to the judiciary, but also intends to publish their names and photos in magazines and newspapers throughout Yemen and the Gulf. He said that this will warn people in other countries of such types of kidnappings.

Al-Sahwa.net, the online version of the Yemeni Islamic opposition paper, published an article that said that a tribal arbitration composed of Ahmed Obad Shuraif representing Bani Dhabyan and the Member of Parliament Sultan Al-Barakani representing Tawfeq Al-Khameri took over the issue and were the ones who released the hostage.

According to Al-Sahwa.net, Al-Khameri offered 10 cars and 20 rifles as a ransom for his son to a member of the Bani Dhabyan tribe. The tribe kidnapped Omer Al-Khameri in retaliation

for an incident involving his uncle, Nabil Al-Khameri, the brother of Tawfiq, whom they said killed one of their tribe members in 1998 over a land dispute and a check for US \$490,000.

Previously, Nabil Al-Khameri denied that he killed anybody and accused 12 individuals from Bani Dhabyan tribe of breaking into his company headquarters.

Last year, the Bani Dhabyan tribe kidnapped two male teenagers and five male engineers, holding them hostage for more than seven months over a financial dispute. The tribe said they would not release their hostages until they received YR 70,000,000 (approximately US \$350,000). At that time, the Ministry of Interior declared its inability to release the hostages by force. In the end, according to tribal sources and the hostages, the Ministry of Interior paid approximately US \$420,000 for the kidnappers to release the hostages. The Bani Dhabyan tribal area is about 40 kilometers to the east of Sana'a.

Continued from page 1

Amid worsening human situation in Sa'ada

Government orders recruiting of tribesmen

Habra says the Yemeni government has ordered every tribe to recruit 5,000 members in preparation for an internal tribal war. "This is the most immense threat to the governorate's future," he noted.

He describes published reports by unofficial media claiming that there's an alliance between the government and Houthis as "false and unauthentic,"

adding that such fabricated reports are meant to make citizens doubt on the strong relationship between Houthis and the Joint Meeting Parties.

"President Saleh made a wise and brave decision to end the war. We had hoped that such a decision would be made earlier in order to stop the bloodshed and prevent the killing of thousands of citizens and army personnel," Habra noted. "If both sides abide by the Doha-brokered peace deal, it will end the conflicts in the northern governorate."

However, he went on to say, "The Yemeni government is cheating the

Doha-brokered peace deal because it is refusing to release all of those detained for alleged connections to the Sa'ada events."

Regarding reports about field surveys to assess war-related damages and the distribution of aid to displaced residents, Habra commented, "We see the same scenario repeated at the end of every war or ahead of any general election." He maintains that the Yemeni government isn't serious about enhancing security and peace in the governorate or reconstructing villages damaged during the war.

In brief

SANA'A

Yemen seizes ten million drugs capsules in 8 months

Security sources said on Sunday that Interior Ministry seized about 1400000 capsules of drugs since the beginning of 2008.

The sources added that the latest operation of capturing drugs was done in the Aden harbor, where about 3500000 capsules of drugs were found inside water heaters imported from a neighbor country.

The source pointed out that investigations are underway with the smugglers.

Last week, the security forces in Hodeidah province held a Syrian citizen charged with smuggling 1.212 million captagon pills into the country.

The seizure comes after the security forces seized a large amount of captagon pills concealed in water heaters shipped in a container and after they found large quantities of hashish on two cars.

Memo of setting project of fattening tuna signed

Ministry of the Fisheries Wealth and Japanese Sojitz Corporation signed on Saturday a memorandum of understanding over a project of fattening fishes and fattening tuna at sum of \$ 20 million.

The objective of the memo is to develop the fisheries wealth in the country by launching several activities to increase fish exports.

The memo was signed by the Minister of Fisheries Wealth Mohammed Shamlan and director of the Japanese cooperation in Middle East and North Africa.

Shamlan said that his ministry would offer all facilities for the company to do all studies on the project in accordance with the executive program agreed in the memo.

Khaled al-Shamsi, assistant deputy minister of fisheries wealth said that the experiment of fattening tuna is first of its kind in Yemen and region in general, adding that training courses would be organized to specialists on preparing the study of the project.

Yemen, China discuss technical cooperation

Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training Ibrahim Hajri discussed here on Saturday with marketing director of Dalin China Company possibilities of expanding the areas of technical cooperation between the two countries.

The talks dealt with the possibilities of providing technical assistance, equipping some of vocational institutes with high-quality Chinese lathes to raise the level of production in vocational institutes in various governorates.

During the meeting, the minister welcomed the technical cooperation between the ministry and Chinese company in manufacture.

For his part, the Chinese company official reviewed the company's lathes regular and productive capacity in accordance with the European standards and specifications, inviting the minister to visit the special factory for manufacturing lathes in China to get acquainted with the manufacturing process.

Government, JICA discuss further cooperation

The government and Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) held talks on Saturday for discussing expanding cooperation between the two parts.

Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Abdul-Karim al-Arhabi who chaired the meeting highlighted continuous development cooperation relations between Yemen and Japan, expressing government's appreciations to JICA's contributions in supporting Yemen's development and its initiative to open an office in Yemen. For his part, JICA's vice chairman affirmed the agency's keenness on supporting development in Yemen, highlighting achievements the country realized in applying reforms.

The meeting dealt with future Japanese support to Yemen development programs in addition to another support in fields of technical education and vocational training, health and rural water.

LAHJ

Workshop held on girls' education in Lahj province

Girls Education Sector in collaboration with the UNICEF is organizing a workshop on Saturday for chairmen of girls education departments in Lahj province.

The three-day workshop, which is attended by 21 participants, will deal with definition of the organizational structure of girls' education sector.

The participants will also be introduced to the importance of supporting activities of girls education in the province.

On the other hand, deputy mayor of the Capital Secretariat Mohammed al-Surmi affirmed on Saturday in Sana'a the importance of officials of girls' education and social participation in the districts of the Capital Secretariat to raise awareness among citizens push girls to join education classes.

SAADA

Carpentry, embroidery, sewing courses concluded in Saada

Saada concluded on Saturday a training course in the field of carpentry, embroidery and sewing for 60 participants which was organized by Women Saada Foundation, funded by the United Nations Higher Commissioner for refugees and lasted for 30 days.

The training aims to provide the participants with ways of handicraft to assist them to earn the money and to alleviate the poverty and unemployment among citizens, particularly for those whose properties were damaged by the events of rebellion in Saada province.

HADRAMOUT

Police arrest further al-Qaeda suspects in Hadramout

SANA'A, Aug. 30 (Saba)- Police arrested a new group of al-Qaeda suspects in Hadramout governorate during two days ago, a security source told 26sep.net on Saturday.

The source added that the police found 21 boxes of weapons, shells and ammunition. After checking up these boxes, the police revealed that they weapons were similar to that found with Tarim cell of al-Qaeda network,

the source said.

MAHWEET

Campaign of spreading insecticide to combat malaria in Mahweet started

Medical teams in Mahweet governorate started on Saturday a campaign of spreading insecticide to combat malaria. The campaign targets 9,000 houses in the governorate. Mahweet governor Ahmed Muhasin inspected activities of the teams in Bani Sad district, pointing out to the active role of the local council and the ministry of the public health and population to carry out this campaign.

Some 150 persons are working in the campaign that will last until the end of this week.

ADEN

Aden University, Amideast sign cooperation memo

Aden University and Amideast Institute signed on Saturday a memorandum of understanding. Under the memo, the American institute would offer scholarships to the university and set up language lab.

The memo was signed by rector of the university Saleh bin Habtor and director o Amideast -Yemen Edward Brados. Ban Habtor expressed happiness with the joint work and cooperation between the university and the institute.

The Amideast director voiced readiness of the institute to enhance cultural cooperation with the university.

ADEN

Aden University rector meets German culture advisor

ADEN, Aug. 30 (Saba) - Rector of Aden University Abdul Aziz Bin Habtoor discussed here on Saturday with cultural advisor of German embassy in Sana'a procedures achieved for opening a department of German language in the Faculty of Arts in Aden university.

The meeting also discussed the German support in this aspect.

They discussed ways of strengthening scientific and cultural relations between the University of Aden and German scientific corporations.

MUKALLA

Made in Yemen conference to be held next December in Hadramout Hadramout governorate would host a conference on Yemeni industries under slogan " Made in Yemen" next December.

In statement to Saba, Minister of Trade and Industry Yahya al-Mutawakel said that the conference comes to enhance serious partnership between the government and private sector to face current challenges and obstacles associated with the industrial development.

Yemeni businessmen, experts and economics at local and international levels would take part in the conference, al-Mutawakel said.

He made it clear that strategy of the industrial and investment development and other topics would be discussed in the conference.

On the side line of regional meeting (AFFI)


YT Taiz Bureau

Head of the Regional Office for Arab Federation of Food Industries (AFFI) in Yemen Faez Saeed Abdoh Saeed affirmed that there is a gap of confidence between Arab governments and Arab private sectors because of the economic legislations serving these governments in the first place and ignoring private sector despite its importance as basic factor of the national economy.

Speaking to the Yemen Times, he noted that weak coordination between Arab private sectors has led to this situation making governments maintain or holding legislations do not serve the whole economy and do not keep pace with international economic changes and weakening activity and competence of the private sector while developed countries' governments tend to enhancing capabilities of private sectors for depending wholly on it.

Saeed called on Arab private sectors to coordinate and integrate with each other and work on enhancing AFFI's role and support initiatives seeking to achieve this integration.

Earlier, Saeed delivered a speech in the opening ceremony of the regional meeting of the AFFI held last Wednesday in Taiz governorate in which he reviewed aims the federation seeks to achieve among of which providing suggestions on Arab legislations concerning protecting food industries.



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DIA is a French international development NGO working in Yemen, Morocco, Cape Verde and Comoros. Its main objectives are the promotion of social justice and the improvement of living conditions for the most marginalized people. DIA has been active in Yemen since 1999 mainly in Taiz Governorate in two geographical areas (rural areas along the Red Sea coast by implementing Watsan projects and Taiz city for the social integration of the marginalized people). One project is currently funded by European Commission, the second one by European Commission and French Embassy in Yemen.

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Faez Saeed: There is gap of confidence between Arab governments and their private sectors.

solutions to problems facing food industries in Yemen and naming problem of managing quality systems, noting that the federation seeks to provide solutions to this problem via rising cooperation treaty with DNV Corporation for enabling companies getting international certificates on specifications.

He indicated that any company get those certificates of international specifications will be able to be a member in the union.

On the other hand, Hazem al-Titawi the representative of DNV corporation presented a review on the corporation, its activities and systems it follows up for improving company's activities and developing their systems for reaching to international specifications.

He clarified that Arabization controlling and observation activities in the Arabian area via help of inspectors speaking Arabic for abolishing language barriers.

He announced that the corporation intends to open local office in Taiz governorate as a seed for opening branches across country's governorates to be able to provide specific and unique services.

He affirmed that the aim of DNV is protecting industries against dangers leading to losses and in the same time protecting consumer via giving him products of high quality.

The meeting discussed means of developing food industries in Yemen and best choices before them.

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 - b. an application must be submitted in person to the Netherlands Embassy.

The applicable form can be downloaded from the Nuffic-website. The required documents (besides the admission letter) are listed on the form. Files must include these documents before presenting it to the Fellowship Officer of the Netherlands Embassy. Candidates must be aware of the deadlines.

Please note that all stages of the procedure are free of charge. Non of the universities/institutions (Dutch or Yemeni) can or may charge you for their services.

The Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) administers the NFP on behalf of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Detailed information/brochure is available on the NUFFIC website at www.NUFFIC.NL/NFP
To obtain a hard copy brochure or any further information on the Netherlands Fellowship Programme, please visit the Netherlands Embassy (tel: 01-421800) during fellowship office hours, every Sunday between 14.00 and 15.00 hours.

The Embassy calls upon ex-alumni of the Netherlands Fellowships Programme

The embassy hereby would like to invite interested ex-alumni to contact the Netherlands Embassy

The Embassy is attempting to revive a Netherlands Alumni Association in Yemen. By subscribing to the membership of this Association, the Embassy will be able to keep you informed on relevant developments with regards to academic co-operation between Yemen and The Netherlands and on events which may be of interest to Yemenis who spent some time in our country. The Embassy, or the Association itself, may organize social events where Yemeni alumni can meet and exchange experiences, with each other or with Dutch citizens. If you are interested please contact wendy.niemann@minbuza.nl.

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Motorcycles involved in 678 traffic accidents, cause unbearable disturbances

By: Almigdad Mojalli

Although those using motorcycles to provide their only source of livelihood are the majority of drivers receiving sympathy from the General Traffic Administration in overlooking their violations, motorcycles are involved in a large proportion of accidents because their drivers often don't adhere to traffic rules.

Nadeem Al-Terzi, general manager of the Traffic Administration, stated that 678 road accidents occurred in 2007 and during the first half of 2008, most involving motorcycles.

"Motorcycles were involved in 403 accidents during 2007 and 275 during the first half of 2008 and, as is common knowledge, motorcycling accidents often result in casualties because they are uncovered/unprotected," Al-Terzi noted.

One such example is 56-year-old Mohammed Ahmed Zubair, who lost his 21-year-old son in a motorcycle accident. "My son had sold all of his wife's jewelry to buy a motorcycle as their source of livelihood, but he lost his life in an accident a month later," his father said sadly.

Um Abdullah Al-Sufyani, 35, recounts that her husband's leg was broken in a road accident while he was driving a motorcycle, forcing him to stay home for six months, during which time they borrowed more than YR 300,000 for both his treatment and their daily living expenses.

According to the Traffic Administration, motorcycles aren't even allowed to be rented.

Two years ago, the Capital Secretariat of Sana'a prevented motorcyclists from working within the



Nearly all cyclists install radios on their motorcycles and then play them at maximum volume

city and compensated their owners. The Traffic Administration then stopped chasing motorcyclists, instead sympathizing with them because they have no other job opportunities, until another solution is determined.

Al-Terzi explains, "During the past few years, we've prevented motorcycles from working in Sana'a due to the damages they cause to both humans and the environment. We find that they contribute to polluting the environment, they cause road accidents mostly resulting in casualties, they create loud noise and they undermine traffic rules by their constant violations."

In 2000, the Yemeni government issued a decree preventing the

importation of motorcycles; however, it was unable to stop such smuggling across its borders.

For this reason, the Traffic Administration doesn't require motorcyclists to adhere to traffic rules, under the pretext that motorcycles aren't allowed to even enter Yemen, so there should be no traffic rules regulating them.

"Because most motorcyclist behaviors – such as not wearing a helmet, removing the muffler, installing radios or even renting motorcycles – are illegal, we'll try to find a way to solve this problem," Al-Terzi noted.

In addition to causing road accidents and casualties, installing radios and

removing motorcycle mufflers causes huge disturbances to others.

Nearly all cyclists install radios on their motorcycles and then play them at maximum volume – both day and night – with absolutely no regard for the elderly, the sick or students.

An extremely loud noise results from removing a motorcycle's muffler, thereby creating a huge disturbance for pedestrians walking on the streets.

Traffic officer Ahmed Al-Hashedi admits, "We really don't know how to deal with motorcyclists. If we prevent them from working in the city, they complain that we cut off their only source of livelihood; but if we let them work, the Traffic Administration won't enforce the traffic rules for them, nor do [motorcyclists] respect other people. They use loud radios and remove their [motorcycle's] mufflers, which disturbs people of all ages – without exception."

Sana'a University student Abdulatif Al-Jabri says he and his friends suffer a lot from motorcyclists driving around at midnight, "About a dozen motorcycles gather around our house at midnight and then drive around the zone many times. We're students, so we need to go to sleep early in order to wake up early, but these guys disturb us a lot," Al-Jabri complains.

The main reasons many Yemenis work via motorcycle are poverty and unemployment. Massive population explosion and unemployment have increased Yemen's poverty rate, thereby forcing many to work by motorcycle, although they know that they risk their lives.

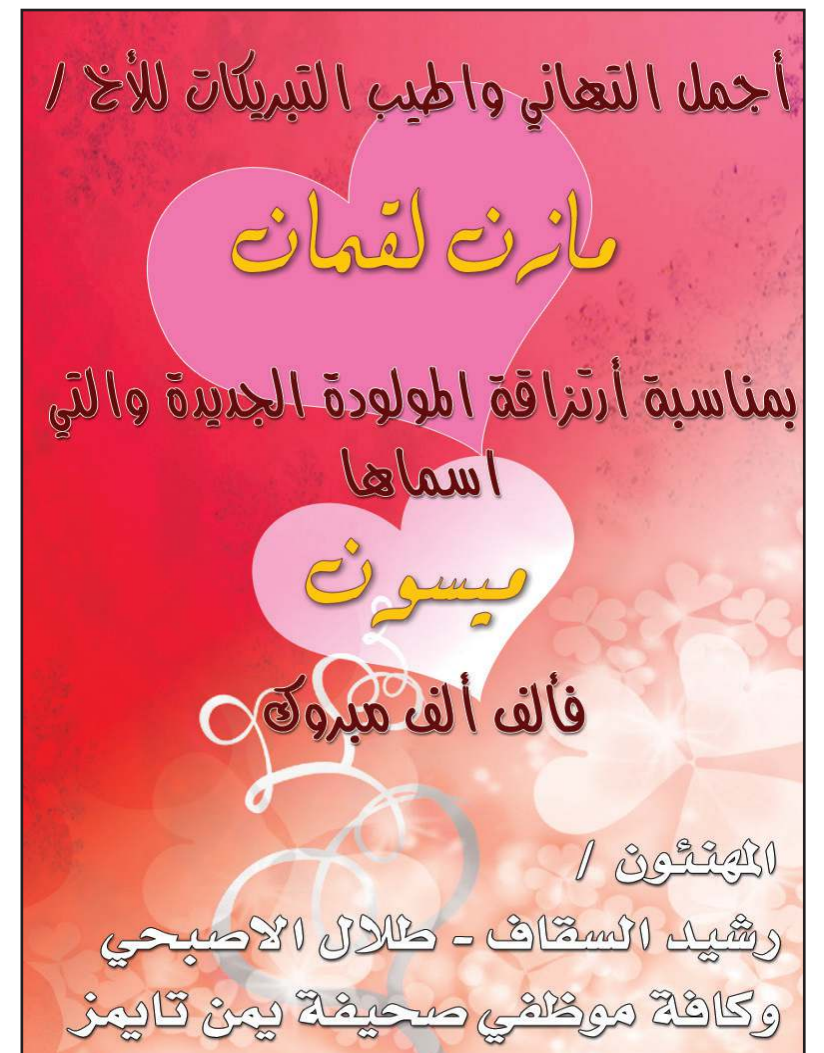
For example, hundreds of Yemeni school and university students have left school to work by motorcycle in order to provide for their families' needs. Because most such dropouts don't trust the Yemeni government to provide job

opportunities for them once they graduate, couple with the fact that their families are unable to provide for their study needs, they prefer to drop out and earn a living via motorcycle.

"You see thousands of university graduates who are jobless, although [President Ali Abdullah Saleh] promised during his election campaign that the government would employ all

university graduates," motorcyclist Ahmed Hamza, 22, noted.

Despite the high incidence of accidents and disturbances to other members of the public, poverty and unemployment compel numerous Yemenis to earn their living by motorcycle, while the Traffic Administration is unable to regulate such cyclists' traffic movements.



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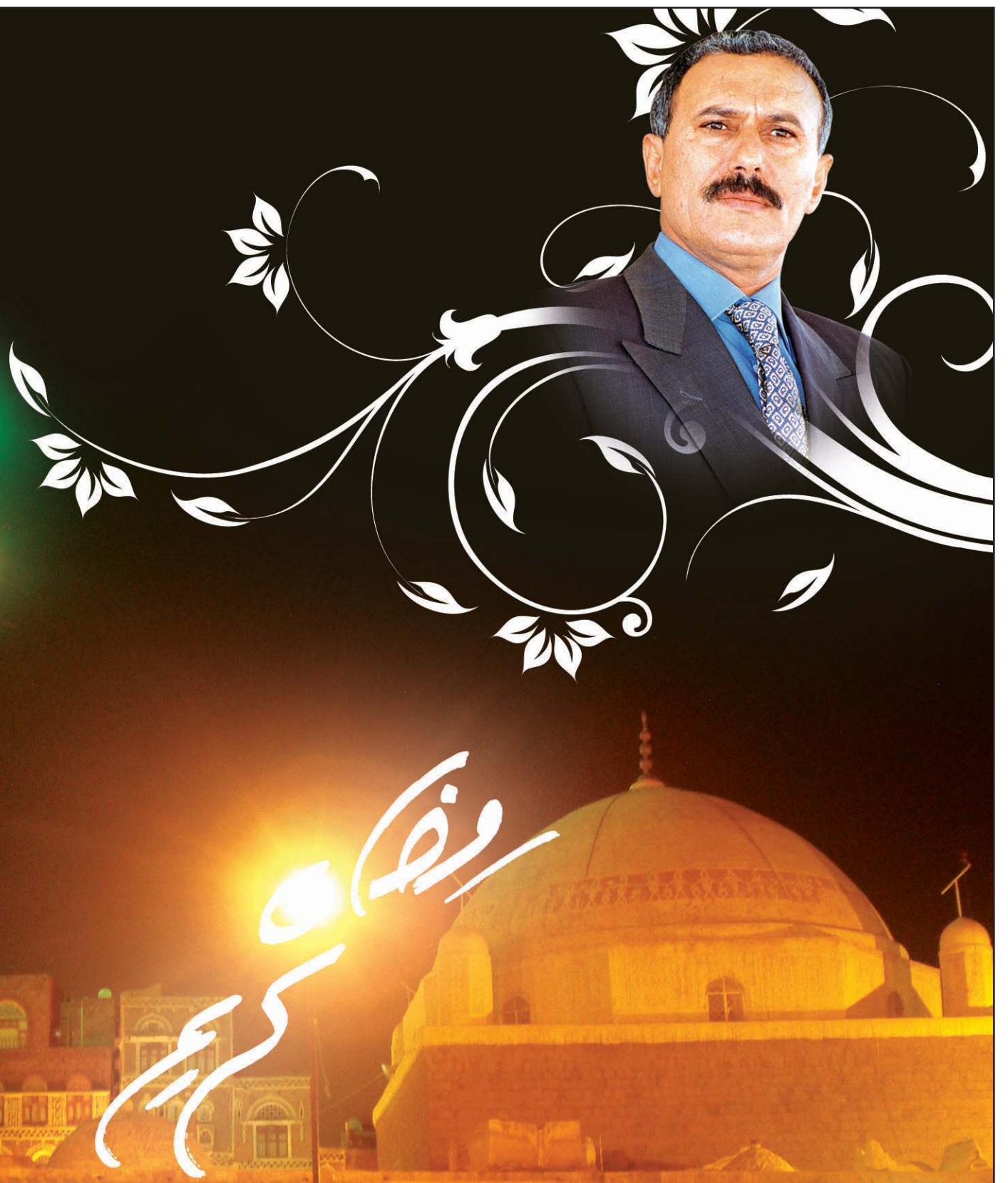
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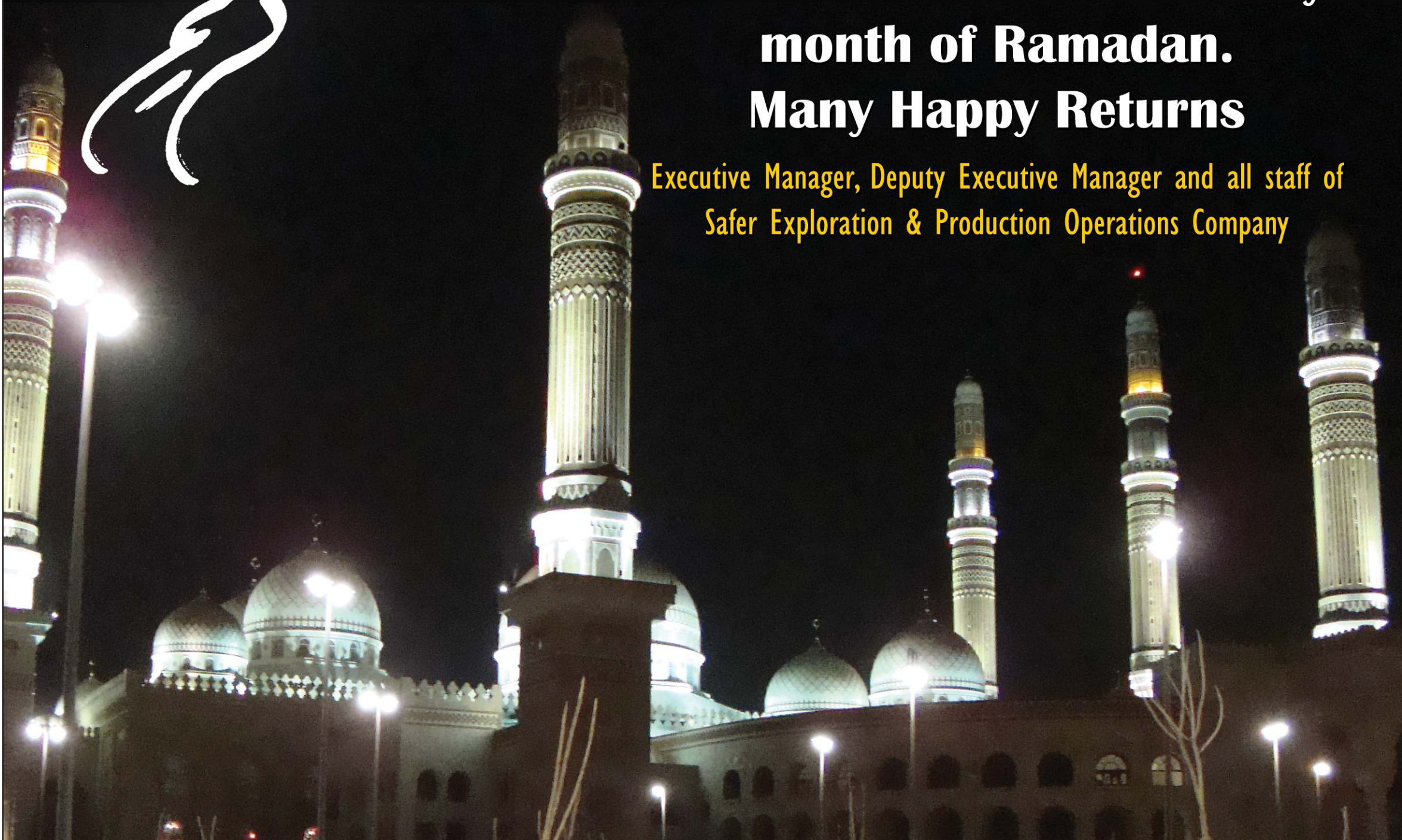
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وشركة كنيديان نكسن بتروليم شرق الحجر المحدودة - قطاع شرق الحجر " ٥١ "

والإدارة العليا وجميع موظفي القطاعين
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Words of Wisdom



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

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

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

Ramadan: Feast of God

By: Khalid Shidaiwa

Ramadan is the holy month of the year in which Moslems fast every day from dawn to dusk. This month is very special for the Moslems. It is the month the Quran was inspired to Mohammad and it is also called God's feast. In this month a person who fasts empties and purifies himself, and then waits for God to walk into his heart. A person, who fasts, by eating less food and taking more care of his behaviour, tries to empty his body and cleanse his heart of impurities. He is supposed to resist his sensual desires and focus on his moral side: eating, drinking, smoking and having sex is forbidden from dawn to dusk.

Of course, those who have health problems, children, and old people are excused. It is very much like a rider training his horse. One who fasts tries to train the horse of his body with his soul. Still these are not the only things a faster should decline: he should not lie, talk behind anyone's back, or hurt anyone for then his fast will be useless. In all, since no unclean place can be expected to be entered by someone honoured, no unclean body and heart is expected to be surrounded by God.

Even many of those who do not avoid eating and drinking do not miss the praying part, especially at dawn and dusk. If praying on other days of the year is like walking toward God, in this month it is like running toward him. At dawn when the routine life has not started yet, and most people are still in their homes, there is a special calmness on the earth which makes praying deeper and more touchable for those who fast.

And at dusk when it is time to break the fast and start the normal life again, praying is like getting one step closer to purity. Life becomes more enjoyable by then! Praying is like opening your heart and inviting God into it. When he walks in he may bring gifts with him: gifts of honour, confidence, peace, patience, courage, satisfaction, safety, and most of all faith and love.

After all, fasting is like cleansing inside and opening hearts, waiting for God to enter. This is what makes Ramadan so special to Moslems. However, it is not the only chance for God to reach someone's heart. God's love is unconditional and any one who is loved by him becomes gifted, no matter what time or month of the year it is or what religion he has!

Significance of fasting:

Fasting occupies a key position in Islam. It is common knowledge among Muslims that Islam is based on five principles, among which is fasting. Also, the Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) said to his companions, "Marriage (and all that goes with it) is half of this religion, and the best man among you is the one who is best and kindest to his wife and women of his household." They asked him, "what is the other half?" and he replied, "purity." He later explained that half of that purity is contained in fasting. More on this later...

Some people think that "Ramadan" means fasting, but actually that's just the name of the lunar month in which

fasting is obligatory on adult sane able-bodied Muslims. (It is not obligatory on pre-adolescents, the insane, women who are pregnant or on their period, those who are too sick to fast, or those who are travelers). Actually, Ramadan means "intense heat," and it was given that name because when the ancient Arabs were naming the months, that month was particularly hot.

The actual word for fasting in Arabic is "sawm," which literally means to both "abstain from and rise above." So, for example, soon after Mary (blessings and peace be upon her) gave birth to Christ (blessings and peace be upon him), she undertook a vow of silence that day, "fasting from speech" (Qur'an 19:26 - where the same word "sawm" is used).

OUR OPINION

Ramdan Kareem Ya Khaiwani

Now that today is the first day of the holy month of Ramdan, automatically the hearts and behaviors of most Muslims soften. Today as I think of my friends and family and congratulate them on the Holy Month, my heart goes out to my colleague Abdulkarim Al-Khaiwani who will be keeping fast (if his health permits) and spending Eid behind bars for no legitimate reason.

Al-Khaiwani is probably the most famous Yemeni journalist of today who has been continuously harassed and taken to prison more than once. He has become a legend and a hero to many Yemeni journalists.

Some of us don't dare to write about the things he had written, and some don't agree with his ideas. Some even think he was mad to have put himself out there as a brave and perhaps rash journalist considering he knew the consequences.

But he still did it, and has no regrets, or so he says.

When he was out of prison last year we had a talk and I asked him why he was doing this, making an enemy of the government. He said someone has to do it, someone has to stand up and say no.

I was impressed and sad in the same time. It meant that he would continue on this path regardless.

The sentence he received was not fair at all. It was not even legally valid. He was accused of being a terrorist because he had photos of the war in Sa'ada.

In the security's eyes, Al-Khaiwani was a terrorist because he had good contacts with people involved in the war. It is similar to Sami Al-Haj Al-Jazeera correspondent who was jailed in Spain for so many years because of his connections.

Is there freedom of press in Yemen? I used to say there is to an extent. Today now that my friend is still behind bars I am not sure this will still be my answer. I guess now I would say there is no press freedom in Yemen, not while Al-Khaiwani and other journalists like him are behind bars.

I also want to ask where the presidential instructions that no journalists should be imprisoned are? If the president can simply say the war in Sa'ada is over and the war stops, why can't he say release Al-Khaiwani and get return him home to his family? It is either the president doesn't have enough power or does not want Al-Khaiwani out and both are not acceptable, at least not to me.

So here goes a prayer and a salute to Al-Khaiwani who is imprisoned without adequate medication or health services and who will most probably not only spend Ramdan and Eid Al-Fitr in prison, but also will not be with us when a 2008 folds and a new year begins.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

The dramatic sequence of events in the Caucasus and the significant role of Russia

By: AbdulQdos AlKhasheeb

From the very beginning of the conflict - caused by Georgia - in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Russia pursued a wise and tactful policy toward such conflict by contributing peace settlement in the region and by showing restraint and patience, despite provocation by the Georgians.

After Georgia announced its independence, it became a major obstacle to Abkhazia and South Ossetia in obtaining their rights to self-determination. It has opposed them and used all of its military force to subjugate them under its rule by killing, destroying and burning to ashes all of the villages and their peoples that it comes across, thereby committing appalling genocide.

However, to the surprise of the Georgian military, the peoples of these newborn states stood harshly against this aggressor's troops, fighting them with great sacrifice and unflinching will and determination, thereby causing the Georgians to fail in their ambitions.

In good faith, Russia followed its normal policy of peacekeeping and mediation, always striving for a peaceful resolution to this conflict and never attempting to escalate the crisis, although it was Russia's responsibility to prevent the aggressor Georgia from attacking these newborn states, but it adhered to its unbiased policy in an effort to alleviate the crisis.

Nevertheless, the unceasing aggression and killings the Georgians exercised - even bluntly attacking peace-keeping troops and killing many of them in the recent large-scale invasion

of South Ossetia, thereby causing unparalleled destruction and horrible massacre of civilians - compelled Russia to send its troops to force the Georgians into a cease-fire and to withdraw its troops from its territory, thereby stopping further bloodshed and destruction.

Immediately thereafter, Russia provided all emergency provisions required by the reckless refugees and the devastated region. It also generously took on the burden of providing aid and assistance to the South Ossetia government for rehabilitation and reconstructing the devastated villages.

Russia's role also extended to besieging Georgian military forces, keeping them confined in their own territory and preventing them from launching any further aggression against either South Ossetia or Abkhazia.

Why have exam halls changed into scenes for cheating?

By: Abdullah Al-Ahmadi

Cheating is no longer considered an educational phenomenon, nor is it still limited to students and teachers. Cheating has become a social phenomenon, behavior and culture at home and in the street, at the job and during the daily activities pursued by people.

Cheating inside the exam halls of the various schools is the direct result of a social reality, as well as the product of multiple factors and conditions. However it seems to be, cheating is symptomatic of rampant corruption in state's institutions and society.

Schoolboys see their fathers, supposed to be an ideal example for modifying behaviors of their children, practice cheating and deception, and tell lies while dealing with others. As a result, children grow up to become professional liars and deceive their parents. The girl deceives her mother, the wife betrays her husband, tradesmen cheat consumers and rulers deceive their people.

Economic and social conditions have a primary role in producing the phenomenon of cheating, which undoubtedly destroys society and future of the nation. In 1994, exactly in the wake of the pessimistic Civil War, victors in the war launched the official beginning of cheating by allowing high school students of that year to cheat inside the exam halls in recognition of their victory in the war.

All the regular students, as well as others without certificates, rushed to exam halls with the intention of obtaining high school certificates. Those who applied for exams without the required documents and certificates were asked whether they had been fighting against the so-called secessionists during the war. If the answer is "yes", they would be allowed to have the exam and cheat

inside the exam halls.

Official launch of cheating:

That year (1994) saw the official launch that legalized cheating. Before 1994, cheating was limited to certain seats in the exam halls, and according to conditions of the area where students were having their exams.

There had been political contest for cheating between schools, whose staff and teachers were affiliated with General People's Congress (GPC), and institutes (schools once run by people affiliated with the Islah Party). This contest also took place between South Yemen and North Yemen.

This year (2008) was comparatively distinctive in how primary and secondary school students were allowed to cheat inside the exam halls. Students no longer care about acquisition, knowledge and skills. They only register their names in schools at the beginning of each school year, and at the end of the school year, they come to exam halls carrying books with them in order to cheat. They only care about obtaining certificates without attending any classes.

The most terrible thing is that of teachers' involvement in this immoral phenomenon. When the education authorities assign many of them to invigilate students in the exam halls, these teachers exploit their power inside these halls to extort students and take money from them in exchange for allowing them to cheat.

Regrettably, cheating brokers hire teachers specialized in the various subjects taught to students at school to answer questions contained in the exam sheets. The security committees, on their side, facilitate entry of the answers after being prepared by teachers, to the exam halls.

Cheating for money:

Invigilators praise this process and say that everything should be paid for.

Arabs' fault is that they don't read

By: Abdullah Al-Shuaibi

The persisting problem with the Arabs is that they don't read. And if they think about reading or read, they don't understand what they have read while the whole world knows the Arabs as behaving this way. Their catastrophe is that they don't like the educated people and scholars in their nations.

The Arab nationals like insulting, arresting and cracking down on educated individuals and scholars in their nations, particularly if they have an available chance to invent. It is an illiterate nation, notably as the illiterate people account for 80 percent of the Arab population.

Such a high illiteracy rate continues to grow with the passage of years while the Arab funds are usually spent on the tourist facilities and resorts for westerners. The Arab nationals have no access to such facilities. The Arab governments also spend a large amount of money on political, security and military purposes at the expense of science and scientific research.

Who knows about the condition of a nation producing diverse resources that only benefit non-Arab individuals and Americans? This means that the Arab world is a nation that safeguards and produces resources to the advantage of others. What we can expect this nation to have except for insult and humiliation in the producing of which it is skilled.

The Muslim nations seem to have abandoned their principles as they respond to demands and desires of the west. The Arab nations have become recipients to knowledge and production of the western science, which was taken from Arabs during the peak of their prosperity. These days, the Arab scientists prefer to emigrate from their homelands to the west due to the lack of good policies

to encourage and support education and scientific research.

The western territories, which were once a ground for destructive wars and violent conflicts, have become lands of peace, security and safety. They have also become homes to Arab scientists and inventors, who left their homelands as a result of repeated crackdown by authorities of their governments.

Arab region: a ground for terrorism and violence

Following departure of Arab scientists to the western countries, their homelands turned to be exposed to looting, rape, backwardness and fragmentation. Only the Arab region that has become a focus for terrorism, conflicts, poverty and backwardness, as well as a ground for the excessive and irresponsible use of weapons manufactured in the west.

The Arabs never react to any acts of violence and vandalism taking place in their homelands, as they are extremely engaged in backbiting each other, or accusing each other of being disbelievers.

The Arab region splits while we turned to suffer civil wars and domestic conflicts, reject one another and conspire against one another. Afterward, we claim to be infallible and know facts as they really occur on the ground. Frankly speaking, we the Arabs are not brave enough to defend our rights and dignity. The westerners, be they weak or strong, think about occupying our homelands because they actually know that we are people who don't read history well. And if we read history, we understand nothing of what we have read.

We are peaceful, submissive and obedient people to oppressive rulers, who often mistreat us, abuse our human rights and deny us our right to lead a peaceful and luxurious life.

Source: Al-Tagheer.com



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Yemen Press Review



Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party
Thursday, August 28, 2008

Top Stories

- Three previous SCER members refuse reappointment to occupy same posts
- Al-Jawf governorate's farmers protest against diesel shortage, governor make impossible promises
- Decision to form SCER reflects ruling party's desire to run in elections alone

An official source at JMP's Executive Body noted that the republican decree, which appointed SCER members, came to reflect the one-side steps by the ruling party and its desire to run in the upcoming parliamentary election alone, as well as eliminate other partners from politics through a variety of scandalous means and practices, the website reported.

It quoted the same source as saying in a press release distributed to the various media outlets Tuesday that JMP leaders committed unprecedented constitutional and legal violations by appointing SCER members in an arbitrary and irresponsible manner that preached a recent agreement between both sides.

It continued that members affiliated with the ruling party contravened even the Parliament Bylaw sine they voted for a decision to select new SCER members without obtaining the legal quorum for

the vote, which is two-thirds of Parliament members numbering 301.

JMP member parties considered procedures taken by GPC in this regard as symptomatic of its poor and unwise policies that usually create complicated and sharp crises between political parties. The opposition coalition rejected the process of selecting three of its members to be added to 9 members from the ruling party as the new SCER staff. The three members were selected by President Saleh without any agreement or approval by their coalition or individual parties.

The JMP source described those (officials in the ruling party's government) who selected former SCER staff to compose the new SCER as "totalitarians" since they usually attempt to edge out the opposition's role in this matter.



Al-Motamar.net, affiliated with General People Congress (Ruling Party)
Wednesday, August 27, 2008

Top Stories

- President Saleh forms new Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum
- A person arrested on suspicion of threatening to attack Aden Refinery
- Ruling Party's General Committee discuss preparations for upcoming

election

The GPC's General Committee held a meeting on Thursday during which it discussed a number of important issues related to national preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections, the website reported.

It added the meeting reviewed the results of recent Parliament's sittings and listened to detailed suggestions on the composition of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER). In this regard, the ruling party's general committee reviewed the list of names proposed by Parliament, labeling it as a positive step within the ongoing preparations for the elections and holding them as scheduled.

The committee also called on all national groups to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections in April 2009 as they are considered one of the crucial stages in democratic development. The meeting stressed the necessity of going ahead in the preparatory procedures according to the Constitution and laws placed in effect.

According to the website, the General Committee praised the role played by the GPC parliamentary bloc and the level of discussions with JMP over the past time period, pointing out that the latter disavowed their commitment to what has been politically agreed on between both sides.

The meeting appreciated the successes achieved by military and security forces in confronting the terrorist acts and practices. The ruling party valued efforts of the military and security troops in

aborting the malicious plots that targeted security in Hadhramout Valley and Tarim City.

Meeting participants prayed for God to have mercy of duty martyrs while they were facing those outlaw terrorist elements and wished prompt recovery of the wounded.



26September.net affiliated with the Yemeni Army
Thursday, August 28, 2008

Top stories

- Political Advisor to President: Yemen's democracy strengthens over time
- Yemeni Authority for Specifications, Standards and Quality Control warns people against trafficking expired dates to local markets
- Interior Ministry sets special security plan for Ramadan

Major General Mohammad Abdullah Al-Qawsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Public Security Sector revealed that senior officials in his ministry set a special security plan for the holy month of Ramadhan, due to provide crucial services to citizens during the month, adding that the plan would be implemented in all provinces, the army's website reported in its lead story.

According to the website, Al-Qawsi made it clear that this plan aims at

providing suitable security atmospheres in harmony with worship and fasting month.

He further went on to say that security authorities would work all day long through patrols in quarters and streets of cities, particularly, key markets and streets that witness crowds during Ramadan's evenings.

The website continued that the Interior Ministry said a man, accused of sending phone threatening message to Aden airport's security director, was arrested. The suspect said in his message that an explosion would occur after two hours of receiving threat.



Al-Ahale Independent Political Weekly
Tuesday, August 26, 2008

Top Stories

- Investments in the country creep toward the southern governorates
- Tradesmen of "Complete the Marsh": Do they donate to reconstructing Sa'ada?
- Ruling party concerned about political dilemma as a result of its refusal to amend election law

The ruling party's general committee discussed the political dilemma caused by the majority of Parliament members voting for retaining the old election law and ruling out recently proposed

amendments to the law as per a recent agreement between the party and Joint Meeting Parties, the weekly reported.

According to special information obtained by the paper, Political Advisor to President Saleh Dr. Abdulkarim Al-Eryani, Mayor of the Capital City Abdurrahman Al-Akwa and Parliament Speaker Yahya Al-Raei sided with the idea of searching for a solution to the crisis and resuming communication with JMP. Al-Eryani described conducting the electoral process amid absence of the opposition as "Solo Game", a singly party's game, played by a single person.

He warned against potential consequences if the ruling party runs in the electoral process alone. According to the information, President Saleh did not opt for this step. The GPC's General Committee authorized Deputy Prime Minister Rashad Al-Alimi, who initiated the agreement between both ruling party and JMP to communicate with the latter while Minister of Legal Affairs Dr. Rashad Al-Rassas was assigned to suggest a workable solution to the crisis.

A JMP legal source, however, viewed the ruling party's action as a heavy joke, adding that a bylaw must not be treated as the law. It lashed out at the ruling party for refusing to carry out comprehensive reforms and amend the election law.

Two weeks ago, all the JMP leaders unanimously agree to stick to reviewing and modifying Yemen's current election system in order to ensure free and fair elections, releasing political detainees and normalizing the political life before an agreement to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Is Israel one disaster from collapse?

By: Ghassan Michel Rubeiz

NEW YORK – Israelis are not united in supporting their government's policies of a four-decade festering occupation of Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territories. The occupation is costly, morally troubling and beyond the capacity of Israel to maintain.

Israelis are relatively free to question the occupation; surprisingly, American politicians, especially politicians who are running for national elections, find it hard to question the occupation. If for nothing else, mere concern for Israel's future should embolden Americans to be more discerning on issues of the Middle East. An important Carnegie study recently showed that Israel is precariously open to breakdown.

The study implies that tight-lipped Americans need to open their minds to Israel's vulnerability as an occupier. The heaviest cost of the 1967 occupation of Arab land is the impact on Israel's national security. Israel received dire warning in the July-August issue of Foreign Policy magazine in the article "The Failed States Index of 2008. The Index's latest results give the Israel/West Bank regime a rank of borderline on national security. The Index lists and discusses a long list of vulnerable countries and identifies twelve variables that undermine their national security. According to this ranking tool, the Israel/West Bank regime is among sixty fragile countries that are "just one disaster away [from] collapse."

Israel has recently joined this club of high-risk countries. The Index rates Somalia number 1, as the most insecure country in the world. Iraq ranks 5, Lebanon 18, Syria 35, Egypt 40, and Iran 49. Georgia, this week's disaster area, ranks 56. The Israel/West Bank regime ranks 58 and falls in the Borderline category, after Critical and In Danger. The study measures each country on twelve risk factors. Israel scored high on 8 out of the 12 risk indicators: demographic pressure, group grievance, uneven-development, delegitimation of state, public service, human rights, factionalised elites and external intervention.

America's unwillingness to more forcefully challenge Israel's Jewish settlement communities in the Occupied Territories has immensely complicated the peace process.

In the same vein, by not applying US pressure on Israel to dismantle the secu-

rity wall and an endless network of humiliating checkpoints – in and around the West Bank and East Jerusalem – America is passively condoning the delay of reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. This "Berlin" wall, which is a work in progress, makes life unbearable for Palestinians. The wall arouses strong sentiments for revenge among the five million Palestinians who live divided under Israeli rule.

Thanks largely to America's unconditional support, Israelis have adapted to an occupation mentality of denial of danger. Israelis today enjoy the safety of their daily-living and their economic prosperity. Their safety and affluence are at the expense of increased political arrest, liquidation of dissidents and reduction of mobility in the occupied territories. But stability of daily living should not be confused with long-term national security.

In the Holy Land today, on both sides of the conflict, the extreme has become the mainstream. Our two presidential candidates who are currently competing to appeal to the Jewish voters should ponder a dangerous dynamic in the Arab-Israeli conflict: The more Israel relies on punitive politics, the more Palestinians rely on militancy.

It is easier for Americans to comment on Palestinian terrorism but not on Israeli excessive retaliation. It is difficult for Americans to view political oppression as a contributing factor to Palestinian terror.

Israeli land annexation is moving parallel to Palestinian demographic expansion, a formula that is leading to system collapse in the future. The signs of political danger are scripted on the wall, but American and Israeli politicians refuse to read the graffiti. If The Failed States Index is a valid diagnostic tool, American foreign policy makers should rethink their Middle East strategy.

Dr. Ghassan Rubeiz (grubeiz@comcast.net) is a Lebanese-American Middle East analyst. He was previously the secretary of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches for the Middle East. This article is distributed by the Common Ground News Service (CGNews) and can be accessed at www.commongroundnews.org. Source: Arabisto.com, 12 August 2008, www.arabisto.com.

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A cry of the past... and shock of present

AL BIREH, Ramallah – Here are my eyes wandering in a country with wonderful clean streets, where there are no signs of burned tires or broken stones! The sky is pure without the impact of smoke bombs or rocket shells. No barriers, separation walls, or checkpoints. Markets, roads, parks, schools, workplaces are full! ed up w th people. I no longer see the fear reflected on the faces of people or the anxiety in their eyes...

I shut my eyes, time carries me to a past that I do not want to recall: the sound of shelling and screams. Suffering from poor economic conditions; the political situation is worse still—the scenes of murder, mayhem, destruction, the stinking smell of bombs and blood, and the taste of oppression, bitterness, and anguish.

I quickly open my eyes to push back the past, which is it still pursuing me. I am tired of hearing cannons and screams. I want to feel something new and beautiful other than pain and suffering. I do not want such alien smells to enter my body. I no longer want to

taste oppression, bitterness, and anguish.

I am still impacted by this surprise. Is this Palestine? I want to scream: Is this Palestine? But my voice can not get out... I feel a strong voice in my body...

I shake and return to the present, which I do not want to lose. My eyes want to reach the farthest point to explore the progress of the new world. My feet begin walking, eager to discover it. I feel a strange thing—a mix of joy and longing...

I see families together in front of their homes, which seem to be built anew; they share conversations, laugh, laugh from the depths, but this giggle is tainted with a touch of melancholy. I share with them the moment, and laugh. But I am forced to follow my feet and move despite the fact that I wish to share the occasion with them.

Why is it that I no longer see vendors sitting in front of their shops counting the people who pass by? Their minds got tired of simply counting, of leaving the people out on the

roads. They work, their goods are unloaded. They no sooner put them on shelves than they get purchased. But their longing for work is tainted with a touch of sadness. I want to enter and work with them, but I continue my walk.

My body, stop: I want to reflect on the children playing, jumping, laughing, but there is still sadness there. I want to participate with them.

I continue walking and I see more and more employees and workers returning to their homes. I am astonished by the activity in their bodies, no signs of fatigue—however I still see the signs of sadness on their faces. I want to share in their feeling and activity.

I continue to walk until the sunlight fades away and my feet lose the ability to continue their trip. I sit on one of the benches, thinking about this new life. I stay here for many long days, feeling this new world and the sadness which still occupies part of it. I want to remove this grief.

I have eliminated it and removed its

traces; I feel I am a new person with a new heart, a new sense; I wiped the past off my life, expelled the grief and anxieties from my days...

I have resolved to live the moment. The question in my mind is: Is this Palestine? Has the occupation ended? Is it real? Have the two peoples agreed to no longer be at war?

Zeinab Mohammed Abdel Salam M'ali is a 10th grade student at Deir Jareer Secondary Girls School, in Ramallah/Al-Bireh. This article was written for the "Imagine 2018" essay competition (www.imagine2018.org), and is distributed by the Common Ground News Service (CGNews) in collaboration with One Voice (www.onevoicemovement.org). It can be accessed at www.commongroundnews.org. Source: One Voice "Imagine 2018" essay competition and Common Ground News, 28 August 2008, www.commongroundnews.org. Copyright permission is granted for publication.

Veiled Sexuality

By Naomi Wolf

A woman swathed in black to her ankles, wearing a headscarf or a full chador, walks down a European or North American street, surrounded by other women in halter tops, miniskirts and short shorts. She passes under immense billboards on which other women swoon in sexual ecstasy, cavort in lingerie or simply stretch out languorously, almost fully naked. Could this image be any more iconic of the discomfort the West has with the social mores of Islam, and vice versa?

Ideological battles are often waged with women's bodies as their emblems, and Western Islamophobia is no exception. When France banned headscarves in schools, it used the hijab as a proxy for Western values in general, including the appropriate status of women. When Americans were being prepared for the invasion of Afghanistan, the Taliban were demonized for denying cosmetics and hair color to women; when the Taliban were overthrown, Western writers often noted that women had taken off their scarves.

But are we in the West radically misinterpreting Muslim sexual mores, particularly the meaning to many Muslim women of being veiled or wearing the chador? And are we blind to our own markers of the oppression and control of women?

The West interprets veiling as repression of women and suppression of their sexuality. But when I traveled in Muslim

countries and was invited to join a discussion in women-only settings within Muslim homes, I learned that Muslim attitudes toward women's appearance and sexuality are not rooted in repression, but in a strong sense of public versus private, of what is due to God and what is due to one's husband. It is not that Islam suppresses sexuality, but that it embodies a strongly developed sense of its appropriate channeling – toward marriage, the bonds that sustain family life, and the attachment that secures a home.

Outside the walls of the typical Muslim households that I visited in Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt, all was demureness and propriety. But inside, women were as interested in allure, seduction, and pleasure as women anywhere in the world.

At home, in the context of marital intimacy, Victoria's Secret, elegant fashion, and skin care lotions abounded. The bridal videos that I was shown, with the sensuous dancing that the bride learns as part of what makes her a wonderful wife, and which she proudly displays for her bridegroom, suggested that sensuality was not alien to Muslim women. Rather, pleasure and sexuality, both male and female, should not be displayed promiscuously – and possibly destructively – for all to see.

Indeed, many Muslim women I spoke with did not feel at all subjugated by the chador or the headscarf. On the contrary, they felt liberated from what they experienced as the intrusive, commodifying, basely sexualizing Western gaze. Many women said something like this: "When I wear Western clothes, men stare at me,

objectify me, or I am always measuring myself against the standards of models in magazines, which are hard to live up to – and even harder as you get older, not to mention how tiring it can be to be on display all the time. When I wear my headscarf or chador, people relate to me as an individual, not an object; I feel respected." This may not be expressed in a traditional Western feminist set of images, but it is a recognizably Western feminist set of feelings. I experienced it myself. I put on a shalwar kameez and a headscarf in Morocco for a trip to the bazaar. Yes, some of the warmth I encountered was probably from the novelty of seeing a Westerner so clothed; but, as I moved about the market – the curve of my breasts covered, the shape of my legs obscured, my long hair not flying about me – I felt a novel sense of calm and serenity. I felt, yes, in certain ways, free.

Nor are Muslim women alone. The Western Christian tradition portrays all sexuality, even married sexuality, as sinful. Islam and Judaism never had that same kind of mind-body split. So, in both cultures, sexuality channeled into marriage and family life is seen as a source of great blessing, sanctioned by God.

This may explain why both Muslim and orthodox Jewish women not only describe a sense of being liberated by their modest clothing and covered hair, but also express much higher levels of sensual joy in their married lives than is common in the West. When sexuality is kept private and directed in ways seen as sacred – and when one's husband isn't seeing his wife (or other women) half-

naked all day long – one can feel great power and intensity when the headscarf or the chador comes off in the sanctity of the home. Among healthy young men in the West, who grow up on pornography and sexual imagery on every street corner, reduced libido is a growing epidemic, so it is easy to imagine the power that sexuality can still carry in a more modest culture. And it is worth understanding the positive experiences that women – and men – can have in cultures where sexuality is more conservatively directed.

I do not mean to dismiss the many women leaders in the Muslim world who regard veiling as a means of controlling women. Choice is everything. But Westerners should recognize that when a woman in France or Britain chooses a veil, it is not necessarily a sign of her repression. And, more importantly, when you choose your own miniskirt and halter top – in a Western culture in which women are not so free to age, to be respected as mothers, workers or spiritual beings, and to disregard Madison Avenue – it's worth thinking in a more nuanced way about what female freedom really means.

Naomi Wolf, the author, most recently, of The End of America: Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot and the forthcoming Give me Liberty: How to Become an American Revolutionary, is co-founder of the American Freedom Campaign, a US democracy movement. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org

يسر

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مع



٣٠ خطاء - ٣٠ مليون

٨ فائزين من ٣٠ فائز ٨ مليون من ٣٠ مليون



محمد حمود علي أحمد - صنعاء



مفيد سعيد محمد إسماعيل - إب



أحمد محمد صالح علي - عدن



أسامة عدنان عائش محسن - إب



محمد قائد محمد مطر - صنعاء



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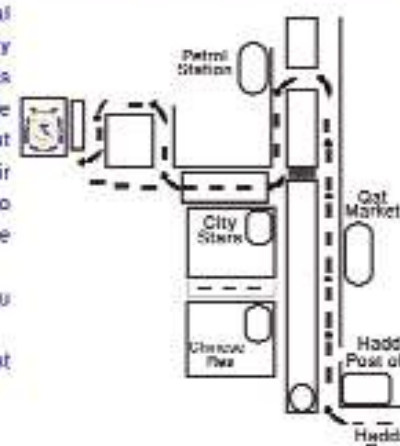
I am confident, that if you visit us you will be impressed. Once again welcome and warmest regards.

Head of School
Karen Al-Sadi

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"Sadaqah" Part III

A Sacred Institution to Facilitate the Poor

By: Qazi Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhany

Effects

It is a responsibility of the intelligentsia that they help to communicate the practical constructive aspect of Islam and spread the forgotten teachings of Islam. The benefits of *Sadaqah* institution are vast. It is time that we rebuild this neglected institute for the larger interest of the *Ummah*. It carries the solution to the financial crises of the *Ummah*. This institution is an indispensable need of the present age. Through this august institution, the problems of the less fortunate people can be eased to a great extent. For the removal of the social evils, *Sadaqah* is a gateway. *Sadaqah* is a compound term, which covers all aspects of welfare. Under this a contributor has an open choice to spend money in different faculties of welfare. *Sadaqah* should be given from ones legal income, because it is Allah, who receives it and no other than Him who will give the reward for it. The importance and utility of the *Sadaqah* has been mentioned in the following *Ahadith*:

Sadaqah provides protection from the divine punishment.

Pay *Sadaqah*, you will be released from *Jahannam*-Hell.

That person is *Maloon*-curse who has the capability to give *Sadaqah* but never does it. Has not anyone heard the *Hadith*

that spending one Dirham as *Sadaqah* is superior and much greater than ten days *Nawafil*.

Those who are paying *Sadaqah*, in reward, will be protected from the heat of the grave.

Give *Sadaqah*, it removes poverty and difficulties, and prolongs once age, life. Sick person should give *Sadaqah* through his hand and request the receiver to offers *Doa* for him, (when receiver offers *Doa*, the giver should recite *A'ameen*).

"When people leave the practice of *Sadaqah* health problems multiply".

Treat and cure your patients through the *Sadaqah*.

Each closed door has its own key, and *Sadaqah* is the key of *Rizaaq* -- source of income.

"Spend *Sadaqah*, to minimize the ratio of poverty, it will increase your wealth and Allah will bestow upon you benedictions.

Ahl al Bait have given a number of recommendations regarding *Sadaqah*.

1. Ali ibn al Husain Zain al Abideen says:

"Whenever anybody gives *Sadaqah* to any needy one, and the receiver offers *Doa* for the giver, the *Doa* is definitely accepted. Whenever the Imam gave something as *Sadaqah*, he also used to kiss on the hand of the beggar just to pay respect. When, it was inquired by some learned one, "you are the grandson of *Rasul (S)*, people kiss your hand as

reverence, why do you kiss the hand of the beggar"? His humble reply guides us how we should treat a beggar. To teach the manner of sincerity in *Sadaqah*, Imam said: "*Sadaqah is like a thing that comes through Allah*".

This explanation proves and teaches how to donate *Sadaqah*. Never remind the receiver what you donated him, nor taunt him nor remind your act of generosity. *Qur'an* has warned in *Ayat* No. 264 of *Surat al Baqarah* in this regard clearly. Do not offer *Sadaqah* in a degradingly manner, but with grace and honour. If the beggar accepts your *Sadaqah*, then through his *Doa* your action will be blessed by Allah. It becomes your baggage for the eternal journey and source of salvation.

When Ali Zain al Abideen was buried, there was a mark on his backside. Some one asked his son, Abi Jafar Mohammad al Baqir about the mark as it did not seem to be a wound. He replied, my father was a great benefactor of the poor, orphans, widows, helpless and needy ones. He used to take dates and bread in a bag and carry it on his back every night through the streets of *Madinah* to distribute it to the needy. The mark was caused by the weight of those things.

3. *Sadaqah* takes away your *Qar'z* (loan) and brings blessings.

Love for worldly possessions is primarily a disease of the heart while the purpose of *Sadaqah* acts as its antidote or cure. *Sadaqah* serves as a form of

Zikar to remind us that all forms of wealth comes from Allah and what we possess is simply a short term loan for which we will be held accountable when our contract expires. This loan is meant to cater for our personal and family needs, and those of the wider society.

Preventions: Everyone knows the common attitude of the people regarding *Sadaqah*. They donate stale food, used clothes, old shoes, and rejected household items to the poor as a *Sadaqah*, in the name of Allah, for reward. This is not *Sadaqah*, but it is simply playing hypocrisy with Allah. It is a misinterpretation of the meaning of *Qur'an* and a shameful act. *Ayat* No. 267 of *Surat al Baqarah* guides us in this regard: "Not to give that which we reject as bad". Abizar al Ghaffari's question with *Rasulullah (S)* and his reply should be enough for guidance. He asked: O my Lord! Which *Sadaqah* is best? *Rasulullah (S)* replied:

"It should be valuable and the receiver should like it very much".

It is a reality that many undeserving people ask for *Sadaqah*. They are professional beggars seeking *Sadaqah* from every corner. It is better that the person who gives *Sadaqah* should investigate before giving, whether the person is eligible or not. *Fiqah* Literature has condemned such professional askers who do not work to earn their livelihood by lawful means,

though they are not handicapped. They enjoy the luxuries of life through easy earnings and hate to do any work. Such people take wrong advantage of *Sadaqah* without any justification and earn their livelihood without due struggle. *Sadaqah* is reserved only for the really needy and deserving persons. It is not for the professional beggars.

Abi Abdillah Jafar Assadiq says:

"A few *Ans'ar* came in the presence of *Rasulullah (S)* extended him *Sal'am*, and submitted that they come with intention that he fulfils their demands". *Rasulullah (S)* asked what thing? They requested, "we wish for a great thing". *Rasulullah (S)* asked: "tell me what it is?" They said, "We want assurance of *Jannat* for us". *Rasulullah (S)* bent down his head for a while, then he marked a line on the floor, with a stick, and raising his head replied, "There is one condition, and it is that you will never ask for anything from any one except Allah, and will not raise your hand to others".

Conclusion

The three basic rules involved in giving money emphasize charity as a religious obligation:

First: a Muslim must give in the name of Allah.

Second: all money donated must be from a legitimate source. Money that has been obtained by illegal source or earned unethically is unacceptable

before Allah.

Third: all excess wealth is seen as Allah's ownership in Islam.

'Hajjat al Jazirah' of the 9th Fatemi Imam, Syedna Husain bin Saeed al Ahwazi (d. around 256 A.H) transmitted Traditions of *Ahl al Bait* in his book: "Kit'ab al Mumin". I concluded my discussion on the following Imami Tradition as *Khitam al Misk*-sealed of fragrance: Abi Abdillah Imam Jafar Assadiq says: "One who provides 'Monetary Relief' to a Mumin at the time of 'Crisis' and help him for his 'Prosperity', Allah shall fulfill his Haj'at-wishes, here and hereafter".

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.

The journey of Naji al-Ali and his Handala character

By: Nisreen Shadad For The Yemen Times

A symposium held at the Yemen Center for Studies and Research in Sana'a, from the 26 Aug. to 3 Sept., intended to celebrate the life and work of Naji Al-Ali, a Palestinian cartoonist. This symposium involved a cartoon exhibition, a documentary and a film about Al-Ali.

Many Yemeni researchers, artists and critics attended the symposium and discussed Al-Ali's life and works.

Celebrating Al-Ali is a celebration of art, which is alive and never dies. It is a celebration of a figure that is a symbol of struggle, a person who could make his art more effective than swords.

Al-Ali was threatened and in London he was shot and died, according to Amina Al-Nasiri, a well-known

Yemeni plastic artist. Al-Ali was shot in the face and mortally wounded in London by unknown persons on 22 July 1987, outside the offices of Al-Qabas, a Kuwaiti newspaper for which he drew political caricatures. He died five weeks later in Charing Cross Hospital, according to Jamal Jobran, a researcher.

Lamy'a Al-Kibsi, a Yemeni plastic artist, said that the cartoon exhibition was impressive, and that the carica-

tures were effective and expressive.

"Al-Ali's works often reflected public opinion and were sharp critical commentaries on Palestinian and Arab politics and political leaders," said Qadri Ahmed Haidar, a researcher at the Yemen Center for Studies and Research.

He is also well known as the creator of the character portrayed in his cartoons as a young witness of the satirized policy or event depicted, and who has since become an icon of Palestinian defiance.

"Al-Ali is our living conscience," said Abdul Bari Taher, former head of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. Al-Ali is depicted as a ten-year old boy, and appeared for the first time in the *Al-Siyasa* newspaper in Kuwait in 1969. It goes without saying that the 10-year-old *Handala*, Al-Ali's protagonist, condenses in his lines and words the experience of an entire era. The figure turned his back to the viewer from the year 1973, and clasped his hands behind his back. The artist explained that the ten-year old represented his age when forced to leave Palestine and would not grow up until he could return to his homeland; his turned back and clasped hands symbolized the character's rejection of "outside solutions". *Handala* wears ragged clothes and is barefoot, symbolizing his allegiance to the poor, according to www.wikipedia.org.

"Al-Ali never died: with his martyrdom, a second life started, richer and stronger than ever", commented Abdul Aziz Al-Maqaleh, the head of the Yemen Center for Studies and Research. "His death has eternally enlivened his cartoons which have become noble and potent sketches of resistance, defiance and moralization," Al-Maqaleh added. "After his death, Al-Ali became more famous. People began to question the reasons behind his death," said Al-Nasiri.

According to Hatim Al-Saqr, professor of Modern Literary and Criticism in Sana'a University, the *Handala* cartoons imply the bitterness as well as the cruelty of desert life.

Al-Ali was born in around 1938 in the northern Palestinian village of Al-Shajara, located between Tiberias and Nazareth, in what is now Israel. He went into exile in the South of Lebanon with his family in 1948 during the Palestinian exodus and lived in Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon, where he attended the Union of Christian Churches School. After gaining his certificate he worked in the orchards of Sidon, he then moved to Tripoli where he attended the White Friars' Vocational School for two years. He then moved to Beirut, where he lived in a tent in Shatila refugee camp and worked in various industrial jobs. In 1957, after qualifying as a car mechanic, he traveled to Saudi Arabia, where he worked for two years,



"This being [Handala] that I have invented will certainly not cease to exist after me, and perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that I will live on with him after my death," Al-Ali said.

according to www.wikipedia.org.

"Al-Ali is a cartoonist who has a vision; all his cartoons highlight the rights of the Palestinians to their land and the silence of the Arabs", said Haniya Abdul Baqi, a student of MA in social science, Sana'a University.

One of the studies by Dr. Fayeze Oweis, from http://www.oweis.com/handala-exhibit.pdf, identifies the characters in al-Ali's Cartoons. According to the study, the major characters are Fatima, Al-Zalama, the Evil Man, and *Handala*.

Fatima: The Good Woman

The role of women in Al-Ali's cartoons is represented by the character of Fatima, drawn with simple, sharp lines and with beautiful features. Fatima plays a primary role in the majority of the cartoons, and is always the good woman, whether she is the wife, the mother or the freedom fighter. She is seen side-by-side with the good man, preparing his rifle, protecting him, keeping him on the right track, or even taking a stand to correct his views and actions. Fatima is also the one who disciplines those who betray the revolution and the resistance. She is used as a symbol for the homeland, for the people, and for the refugee camp.

Al-Zalama: The Good Man

The second major character in Al-Ali's cartoons is a tall, old man drawn with sharp and defined lines. This character is thin, barefoot, and poor, with patched clothing. He is always honest and represents the same good values regardless of the different names, nationalities, and religious affiliations that he represents in the cartoons. Al-Ali referred to him as Mohammad, Maroun, Abu Elias, Abu Hamad, Abu Jasim, and mostly as "Al-Zalama," which means "the man" in Palestinian dialect. This man plays major roles in the cartoons either by himself or with Fatima, going head-to-head with the evil characters. Al-Zalama is a symbol

of poverty and oppressed people. He is the ordinary Arab man, a Palestinian, a Lebanese, or an Arab man from the greater Arab world. He plays the role of a freedom fighter against the occupation, a refugee, an oppressed person, an educated person, and an advocate for human rights in the Arab world.

Al-Zalama is the writer who advocates democracy, but has to prepare his will after publishing an article about it. Al-Zalama is also the reader who demands that writers and journalists improve their writing and stay on the path of national unity and the liberation of Palestine.

The Evil Man (The Moron)

The counterpart to the good-hearted characters of Fatima and al-Zalama is a character with no aesthetic features: the Evil Man or the Moron, as Al-Ali sometimes referred to him. This character symbolizes the opposing values of the good-hearted characters. He represents ugliness, wealth, injustice, weakness, sell-out, aggression, oppression, laziness, and stupidity. Sometimes he is presented individually and at other times in a group of duplicate characters with the same features— ugly, stupid, lazy, and dirty in their looks and actions. The duplicate characters, who look like bags of fat with no legs, represent all the evil forces and everything that is negative in the Arab world and the region.

Handala: A Character and a Symbol of Struggle

One of the hallmarks of al-Ali's cartoons was his creation of these unique characters, the most important of which is *Handala*, an international symbol of Palestinian identity and the Palestinian struggle.

Besides the good-hearted characters, from the time that Al-Ali started drawing in the early 1950s and until 1969, he signed his drawings either with his first name (Naji), with a cross or with both.



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