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Inside:



5
CSSW Family Development
Sector: A model of a charity
for women



7
The challenges facing women's
sports in Yemen



12
Al-Kuwait Hospital crying
for rescue

58 killed and dozens are missing in strong floods east of Yemen Government declares Hadramout and Al-Maharah devastated areas

By: Aqeel Al-Halali
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Oct. 26 — 58 have been killed, dozens of citizens are missing and over 20,000 people are homeless due to flash floods that resulted from heavy rains in the eastern areas of Yemen including Hadramout and Al-Maharah.

In a report by Minister of Interior Mutaahhar Rashad Al-Masri, the death toll from the floods in Hadramout and Al-Maharah governorates was estimated at 58 and rescue teams had been able to shelter 3,000 people whose houses were destroyed.

The Ministry of Defense declared in its latest statistics published in its electronic "September mobile" service that 1,700 houses and public buildings had collapsed and that power lines, telephone wires, roads and bridges had been cut due to floods in many areas of the two governorates.

In Al-Maharah governorate, 1,318 kilometers east of Sana'a, floods caused more than 45 fishing boats to sink, an Indian ship to break down and a cut in telecommunications in the districts of Hawf, Qishin, Shahin and Saihut due to damage to optical fiber cables and the destruction of mobile phone coverage towers.

In Hadramout governorate, located



The historical city of Shibam which is a UNESCO world heritage site is threatened by the storm and heavy rain.



Hundreds are rendered homeless in Hadramout, Al-Mahra and Shabwa governorates.

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some 794 kilometers east of Sana'a, eyewitnesses said that floods are threatening the historical town of Shibam, a UNESCO world heritage site, after heavy rains resulted in the collapse of archeological buildings and had eradicated features of other historical ones.

Salem Al-Khanbashi, governor of Hadramout, said in a statement to the state-run Saba News Agency that the executive authority in Hadramout had received field notifications which indicate that a number of dead bodies are floating in the flood water.

The rescue and emergency committee formed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh last Friday has declared the governorates of Hadramout and Al-Maharah devastat-

ed areas "due to the major damage that befell them."

Hasan Al-Lawzi, Minister of Information and member of the emergency committee, told Al-Siyassiya newspaper that the committee is currently surveying human and material damage and said that "flash floods resulting from heavy rain [had] caused huge damage to roads and bridges and cut electricity and telecommunication cables in addition to the human damage."

President Saleh, who paid an inspection visit to Al-Mukalla and Sayun cities in Hadramout, gave directives to the emergency committee and local authorities to hasten in providing aid, saving the affected citizens and taking the necessary precautions to avoid further damage from the floods.

Local authorities in the devastated areas have taken measures to limit the damage of the flood, including sheltering citizens whose houses were affected and reopening roads blocked by flood waters as well as searching for the missing in cooperation with the Yemeni army.

Last Friday and Saturday, rescue teams were able to evacuate 2,300 citizens and 200 families in different areas of the two affected governorates and shelter them in schools. In addition, they saved a group of German tourists after the flood blocked their way in one of the Hadramout valleys.

Continued on page 2

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While citizens appeal for humanitarian aid Médecins sans Frontières fail to reach affected people in Sa'ada

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Oct.25 — Tribal sources from the Sa'ada governorate have said that the state of people, particularly those who are loyal to Houthis, is worsening due to the advent of winter and the continuous siege imposed by security authorities and tribes supporting the government in the area.

"A military checkpoint in Sa'ada governorate's Al-Malahidh area prevented a medical unit belonging to medical humanitarian aid agency Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) from entering to Marran, Haidan and Saqain areas to offer medical aid to the affected citizens," according to a statement issued by Houthis media center last Tuesday.

The statement said, "The Al-Malahidh checkpoints, in addition to the Al-Majram military site in the mountainous area of Marran, have recently witnessed military reinforcements". It accused security apparatuses of practicing violations since the agreement to end the fifth war in Sa'ada.

According to the statement, new military sites have been set up in the areas

bordering Marran from the Al-Malahidh area and confirmed that arrests had taken place in Sana'a and Mareb during the last two days.

In a phone call with the Yemen Times, Ghadah Hatim, representative of MSF in Yemen confirmed that there had been a misunderstanding between the organization and the Sa'ada health office as the latter asked the organization to postpone its visit to Marran, Malahidh and Saqain. "Our car was heading to Marran Hospital carrying a female physician, a pharmacist and a translator as well as the driver; our organization had been offering aid there since December 2007, but had to stop in May 2008 due to the war in the area," said Hatim, adding, "But due to a misunderstanding between the health office and us, our car couldn't reach its destination."

Hatim said: "The organization is saddened by the poor health situation in those areas which lack all kinds of health care. For humanitarian reasons, we aim to offer healthcare to residents of these areas, provide them with free medication and conduct check-ups for malaria which has spread in Al-

Malahidh and the nearby areas."

She added that MSF hoped that the Sa'ada Health Office would hasten to agree to give MSF personnel the required authorization to proceed with their work in these areas, based on the agreement between the organization and Ministry of Public Health in late in 2007.

From his side, Hanboosh, vice head of Sa'ada Heath Office, told the Yemen Times by telephone: "We did not grant the French organization [MSF] any authorization to enter Marran. Marran hospital is still in the hands of the Houthis and is not under the control of the health office. We will not allow any organization to reach these areas, unless the Houthis hand the hospital over to us as the concerned official authority, and they [MSF] will have to wait until the situation gets better in those areas."

Shiekh Saleh Habrah, representative of the Houthis told the Yemen Times: "Offering medical services to citizens is an entirely humanitarian act, and we refuse the politicization of humanitarian issues. Our regions are still in a state of tension as the government has not

shown commitment to previous agreements. The government has neither released detainees of the Sa'ada war, nor put a complete and honest end to the fighting. It is still maneuvering and creating crises."

"MSF should travel to Marran and other affected areas to offer its humanitarian services without waiting for an authorization from the authorities, if the organization really wants to offer humanitarian aid according to their goals," said Habrah.

He maintained that the humanitarian situation in these areas is terrible, in terms of medication, food supplies and services.

"Food supplies that reach Sa'ada are seized by influential people who store them away; citizens are not given -or even sold- any these foods," he said, adding, "the Red Crescent organization which pretends to offer humanitarian aid -and therefore receives support from international organizations to do so- is dominated by corrupt individuals since only 3 percent of the aid reaches the affected citizens, with influential figures looting all the rest. They offer citizens blankets of poor quality which

they purchase at a low price of YR 600 each, and force those who receive them to sign that they have been given blankets worth YR 1700 each."

"These influential ruling party-affiliated individuals have stored huge quantities of food -originally supplied by international bodies as humanitarian aid to the war-affected citizens in Sa'ada- to later offer it to people in return for their vote for ruling party candidates in the upcoming elections. Meanwhile, the people of Sa'ada are now starving both in the camps and ravaged villages."

Habra said that the media, both public and independent, don't report the true facts about humanitarian aid offered by the government and international organizations, and maintained that these organizations neither offer the proper aid nor report violations against human rights in Sa'ada.

In a related event, Abdul Karim Al-Hudwi, 28 years old from Sa'ada governorate's Haidan district, was reported dead this past Oct. 12, 48 hours after his release from Qihza prison.

Relatives of Al-Hudwi said that his death had resulted from hepatitis, as

the prison authority had refused to release him for treatment. They pointed out that he was infected with hepatitis due to poor conditions inside the prison and had suffered from the illness for around two years.

Al-Hudwi was detained by security while he was paying a visit to his uncle's house in Al-Thaluth region in Marran. After he was arrested along with his uncle, the authorities destroyed his uncle's house in addition to a mosque near the house.

Last year, Hashem Hajar, a suspected Houthi-loyalist imprisoned in Sana'a, was reported dead by the central prison a few hours after being transferred to Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a.

Hundreds of Houthi loyalists are still detained in many prisons despite of the end of the fifth war in Sa'ada between the Yemeni army and the Houthis on the July 17 this year. Some of the detainees suffer from poor health and psychological conditions and their relatives complain that the government, political parties and human rights organizations don't pay attention to their ordeals.

Yemen drops thirteen places in RSF Index

By: Salma Ismail

SANA'A, Oct 26 — Independent and opposition journalists battled major restrictions and prosecution in 2007, with a dozen arrested and others physically attacked in the street, causing Yemen to slip thirteen places in the fifth annual Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index (French: Reporters sans frontières, or RSF), which covers the 12 months from September 2007 to September 2008.

The report by the Paris-based media organization, issued on Wednesday, stresses that it is not economic prosperity but peace that guarantees press freedom and ranks Yemen 155th out of 169 countries.

According to the report, at least a dozen stringers for foreign satellite TV stations were banned from sending out material on social unrest and opposition activity in the last quarter of 2007 in Yemen. They included Hammud Munasser, of the Saudi station Al-Arabiya, who was arrested, had his videotapes seized and was interrogated for an hour on the road between Sana'a and Khamer, where about 18,000 people protested on 18 November about the government's economic policies. A crew

from the Qatari station Al-Jazeera was stopped on 10 December from traveling to the southern province of Lahj to cover an opposition rally.

According to the report, the Yemeni government targeted journalists like Abdulkarim al-Khaiwani, former editor of the weekly Al-Shura (suspended in 2005) was arrested in June and held for a month before being freed for health reasons. He was prosecuted before the state security court (which specializes in counter-terrorism) for "putting out news likely to undermine army morale" and faces the death penalty if convicted. He is accused of having links with rebels in the north and has appeared in court with 14 others charged with terrorism.

The report fails to mention that following an international advocacy effort Al-Khaiwani walked out of a Sana'a prison on September 25 after being granted a residential pardon.

Among the violent incidents that RSF said caused Yemen to drop in its rankings in the index was when a dozen armed men allegedly arrived in military vehicles at the offices of the weekly Al-Sharaa on 30 July and threatened to kill editor Naif Hassan, who was not there. The attack came two weeks after the defense ministry filed a suit against the

paper after it printed articles about the fighting in the northern province of Saada. The paper was founded in June 2007.

Ali al-Assadi, editor of the weekly Al-Adwaa, was beaten unconscious in Sanaa on 12 December by thugs with sticks and pickaxes. He said his attackers wore army uniforms.

According to the 2008 report, "The post-9/11 world is now clearly drawn...Destabilized and on the defensive, the leading democracies are gradually eroding the space for freedoms. The economically most powerful dictatorships arrogantly proclaim their authoritarianism, exploiting the international community's divisions and the ravages of the wars carried out in the name of the fight against terrorism."

The United States is now (36th) behind countries like Mali, Namibia, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, the Czech Republic, Ghana and South Africa.

The same six Middle East countries that are near the bottom of the world press freedom index every year have confirmed their status this year again. Free expression "continues to be no more than a dream" in Iraq (158th), Syria (159th), Libya (160th), Saudi Arabia

(161st), the Palestinian Territories (163rd) and Iran (166th).

The bottom three violators of press freedom are Eritrea, North Korea and Turkmenistan in that order.

The annual report signals growing corruption within democracies in conjunction with ineffective patterns of dialogue and an increasingly irrelevant United Nations as leading causes for the international community's inability to reign in the world's worst violators of press freedom.

When Robert Menard founded Reporters Without Borders twenty years ago, to advocate freedom of the press around the world and to help journalists under attack, he gave the group a name which evokes another French organization respected worldwide for its humanitarian work and which maintains a strict neutrality in political conflicts - (Doctors Without Borders).

Although the RSF has embraced many causes near and dear to journalists, its objectivity remains disputed due to the fact that it is heavily funded by government grants.

According to the Centre for Research on Globalisation (CRG), an independent research and media group of writers, scholars, journalists and activists based

in Canada, "The real role of RSF is not to defend press freedoms as they profess; instead it is to promote the political and economic interests of the entities that fund them such as the U.S. government, which generously contributes to the Parisian organization through the National Endowment for Democracy, an entity that the world's most important newspaper, The New York Times, calls a CIA front.

In RSF's 2004 report on the invasion and the aftermath of Iraq, it had said that the overthrow of Saddam Hussein "opened a new era of freedom . . . for Iraqi journalists" and had asserted that the bombing of the Iraqi Ministry of Information—a war crime under the Geneva Conventions—"[had ended] decades of zero press freedom."

According to the Committee to Protect

Journalists, since the 2003, US-led invasion of Iraq, up to 135 journalists and 51 media support workers have been killed in the line duty.

Before the invasion of the country in 2002, Iraq had ranked 130th. This year, Iraq is ranked 158th.

The index only deals with press freedom, and does not measure the quality of journalism.

Reporters without borders compiled the index by asking 14 freedom of expression organizations that are its partners worldwide, its network of 130 correspondents, as well as journalists, researchers, jurists and human rights activists, to answer 50 questions about press freedom in their countries. The index covers 169 nations. Other nations were not included because of lack of information about them.

PSO continues to detain U.S. citizen Khalid Sherif

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, Oct. 25 — Although there are no charges against American-Yemeni citizen Khalid Al-Sherif, 23, he continues to be detained by the Political Security Organization (PSO).

An American of Yemeni origin, Khalid Al-Sherif was detained in June this year while on holiday from the United States where he had been living and studying.

This September, a presidential directive was issued to release several detainees including journalist Abdulkarim Al-Khaiwani and Lu'ai Al-Muayyad, but Al-Sherif was not on the



Khalid Sherif

list.

According to sources close to Al-Sherif, he has no interest in Yemeni politics.

His only fault was that he had many friends in Yemen who he used to meet in internet chat rooms and exchange emails with. Some of these friends were on the Yemeni security watch list, and Al-Sherif may therefore have been found guilty by association.

The US embassy in Sana'a reported Al-Sherif's ordeal to the State Department in Washington, and sent a diplomatic note to the Yemeni authorities protesting at his physical mistreatment by the National Security

Bureau (NSB) where he was secretly detained prior to his transfer to the PSO, the sources added.

The Yemeni government has yet to respond to the protest.

Al-Sherif's Hashemite background is believed to have played a role in him being targeted, since the Yemeni authorities have been suspecting all Hashemites to be sympathetic to the Houthis. When Khalid was detained he was told by the NSB that they suspected him of being a Houthi-sympathizer.

The U.S. embassy in Sana'a has refused to comment on any Yemeni-US issue for the time being

With GTZ's support, Yemen seeks to solve water problem

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

SANA'A, Oct. 22 — To contain the water crisis caused by limited water resources and great water consumption, the Yemeni government, supported by German Technical Cooperation or GTZ, has drawn up a list of practical measures to protect national water resources, organize water consumption and find new sources of water in Yemen.

On Wednesday, the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA) held a workshop to present the draft of a by-law to complement the existing water law to concerned officials and asked them for their feedback.

Deputy Minister of Water and Environment Mohammad Al-Hamdi asserted the importance of banning random well drilling and of educating people to stop such drilling to preserve

ground waters.

Al-Hamdi, who opened the workshop, highlighted the German government's efforts in supporting water projects in Yemen and urged Yemenis to notify the government on any case of random drilling.

The new by-law aims to implement the water law in fields of distribution, management and utilization of water resources as well as their protection from draught and pollution, and to improve the means of water distribution in Yemen.

It intends to achieve better management, maintenance and operation of water facilities and to include beneficiaries in investment as well as the management, protection and preservation of the country's water resources.

In the workshop attended by 70 participants representing the Ministries

of Water and Environment and of Agriculture and Irrigation, NWRA, GTZ, World Bank and other concerned bodies, constructive feedback was given about the draft.

Dr. Mohammad Al-Saqqaf, legal consultant, emphasized the dangers facing water security in Yemen. He explained that, while the country is among the poorest in the world in terms of water resources, its high population growth rate means that its water consumption is very high.

Al-Saqqaf, asked by GTZ to review the draft of the by-law, indicated that cultivation activities, in particular the expansion of qat cultivation to consume 30 percent of Yemen's ground waters, are the main factors of draught. He suggested an additional clause to the draft to ban qat cultivation in the country and import the narcotic plant from Ethiopia to satisfy the needs of

qat-chewers instead.

The comments focused on important issues the draft did not previously include such as the absence of penalties for random well drillings, the definition of a water crisis and the inclusion of beneficiaries contributions.

The World Bank's Water Resources Specialist for the Middle East and North Africa Yoshiharu Kobayashi stressed the importance of preserving ground water and of preventing the depletion of the Sana'a water basin. Citing studies that reveal that Sana'a Water Basin will reach depletion during the next 10 to 15 years, he urged the government to take strict measures to save the Sana'a basin.

GTZ supports five water projects in Yemen and has supplied water sectors with 80 million for the period of 2006 to 2015.

Continued from page 1

Government declares Hadramout and Al-Maharah devastated areas

Chairman of the service committee in the Hadramout local council Abdullah Bawazeer told the Yemen Times by phone that rescue operations were ongoing in cooperation with the army forces which use helicopters to rescue stranded citizens in different areas of the two governorates. He pointed out that continuous rainfall and movement of the flood waters were hindering the rescue process.

Bawazeer said, "The districts of Wadi Hadramout are more affected than the coastal areas of the governorate due to the big number of valleys [around 55 valleys] in Wadi Hadramout area. Five helicopters belonging to the army and another belonging to an oil company have relocated to Sayoun airport to continue rescue operations and offer aid to the affected areas.

Local, Arab and international relief Meanwhile, the Ministry of Public Health and Population announced that it had formed an emergency chamber especial for surveying damage caused by the floods and put in place an overall plan to face the results of the disaster.

Majid Al-Junaid, Deputy Minister of Health for the primary care sector, said that the ministry has sent 144 cartoons of medicine to Hadramout governorate. In addition, the ministry formed a field team to assess human damage.

Hussein Al-Haddad, head of Sayoun Health Office, confirmed that hospitals of Hadramout were prepared to receive emergency cases and noted that they had been provided with necessary medical equipment as well as ten ambulances.

For its part, the Wadi Hadramout branch of the Charitable Society for Social Welfare announced that it had bought foods and tents as well as blankets for YR 10 million to be distributed to the affected people. Al-Saleh Corporation for Social Development announced that it had sent medical aid to Sayoun city and opened a donation account to receive support from charitable people and traders "who desire to support the relief and sheltering efforts" in the affected areas. The Central Bank of Yemen also opened a donation account to receive support for the

affected people "based on the directives of Ali Mohammed Mujawwar", the prime minister.

In a first reaction from the Yemeni private sector, Hayel Saeed An'am announced that it would donate YR 200 million to support relief and sheltering efforts in the devastated governorates. The Doum Company for Trade and Constructions donated USD 12,000 while businessman Ahmed Ghamdhan donated YR 20 million to help the affected people.

On the regional level, the United Arab Emirates announced that it would offer urgent aid to help the affected people. The UAE News Agency reported that Sheikh Khalifah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, president of UAE, had given directives to offer urgent aid to provide relief to people affected by the floods in many areas in Yemen. The agency said that this initiative came to reduce the suffering of Yemeni people in Hadramout and Al-Maharah.

UAE charity Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktuum for Charitable and Humanitarian Works announced it was setting up an air and land bridge to deliver essential materials to affected people. Ibrahim Bu Melaiha, vice head of the association's board of trustees, said that a first plane carrying food and urgent relief including 3,000 tents, 10 power generators, 20 fog pumps and 20 water pumps, would head from Dubai to Al-Mukalla on Monday.

Bu Melaiha maintained that the power generators would be used to operate some clinics to be able to offer first aid to the affected people and that the fog pumps would serve to prevent the spread of malaria via mosquitoes, while the other pumps would be used to drain water from villages and populated areas.

General Secretary of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Akmal Al-Din Aughy, last Saturday called on all donor countries as well as financial and humanitarian organizations in the Islamic world to offer all possible forms of support to help the affected people and reduce their ordeal. He further directed the administration of humanitarian affairs in the organization to organize a relief campaign to the devastated areas in Yemen.

In Brief

SANAA

Yemen, IOM discuss migrant data project

Minister of Migrant Affairs Ahmed Musaed Hussein has discussed with the director of the International Organization for Migration IOM office in Sana'a Stefano Tamagnini the project of migration data.

The two also discussed implementation of the first stage of the project in mid November and that will include initial preparations for the project as well as qualifying cadres through a training course on inserting English data.

The meeting, moreover, dealt with the initiative for organizing the new mechanism for Yemeni contract labor regulation between Yemen and the United Arab Emirates.

On the other hand, the ministry is preparing to hold the third migrant conference and two workshops for businessmen and professionals, Hussein said.

Life skills workshop launched in Sana'a

Sana'a launched on Saturday an educational workshop on life skills domain for 25 trainees which organized by the Ministry of Education and Arab Bureau for Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) which will last for the five days.

The purpose of this workshop is to

increase knowledge and ability in skills necessary for everyday living, educational skills in the areas of citizenship, health, peace, , culture and strengthening professional capacity. This workshop gives the type of knowledge needed by everyone for everyday life. At the opening of the workshop, Deputy Minister of Education Abdullah al-Hamedy clarified that the program of life skills in Yemen, implemented by ABEGS, is the fruit of strengthening cooperation between Education Ministry and Arab Bureau for Education for the Gulf States.

He affirmed the importance of benefiting from Omani trainers who authorized to train during the training process.

Yemen, Thailand discuss fishing cooperation

Ministry of the Fisheries Wealth Mohammed Shamlan talked on Saturday with chairman of Thailand's A'alm Al-bihar Company the possibility of establishing fishing projects and foundations to re-export the fishing products in Socotra.

They reviewed experience of two countries in the field of the fisheries wealth and the best ways to develop joint work in this field. During the meeting, Shamlan affirmed that his ministry would offer all facilities for Thailand's investments in the field of the fisheries wealth to create new job opportunities.

ADEN

WB determines investment sites in AFZ

A team by World Bank (WB) is currently implementing a scientific comprehensive study in Aden Free Zone (AFZ) sector G at the Red Sea coast at the cost of US million.

The study, which is implemented by Acors Company, aims at determining how this sector be used by AFZ to define investment sites at the industrial, economic, tourist and housing fields. In a statement to Saba, vice chairman of General Free Zones Authority and AFZ chairman Abdul-Galil Shaif Al-Shaibi made clear that WB will enhance the relation between two sides. "I expect that Aden city would achieve in the next years 2009-2012 success at the tourist, investment and economic fields," he added.

Aden Community College, Yemeni-Jordanian University sign deal

The Aden Community College signed on Saturday an agreement with the Yemeni-Jordanian University branch. Under the agreement, the two will exchange experiences in areas such as training and study programs. The agreement calls for swapping the contents of college curriculums and publications, participation in training activities and coordination for Arab

academic conferences.

It also calls for sending Jordanian professors to teach the Aden Community College, accepting Yemeni students to learn at Jordanian universities according to acknowledged admission systems as well as organizing training courses to develop educational activities at the community college particularly in the technical education and vocational training area.

UAE company to establish cars' tires factory in AFZ

Vice chairman of General Free Zones Authority and Aden Free Zone (AFZ) Abdul-Galil Shaif al-Shaibi met on Saturday with UAE delegation chaired by director of Bin Sooda Investment Companies Kareem Far'a . During the meeting, Far'a showed desire to establish a factory for producing cars tires in Aden Free Zone. It is expected that the factory will cover the markets of the Middle East and the African Horn as a first step. Al-Shaibi indicated that AFZ, according to investment law, offer many investment opportunities and facilities, noting the importance of Aden Port as the most important port in the region. For its part, the UAE delegation affirmed its readiness to work to bring many Arab and Gulf businessmen to invest in AFZ.

Their News

Sporty front grille design and host of comfort features to complement the newly-designed petrol engines

Suzuki announces 2009 model Grand Vitara to enhance performance and comfort with key modifications

Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC) has announced the launch of the 2009 model Grand Vitara to enhance the SUV's overall performance, looks and comfort. The move is expected to further boost sales of the Grand Vitara, which has created a niche for itself in global markets with its excellent on-road handling; uniquely sporty, tough-looking exterior design; and outstanding off-road performance.

One of the significant changes to the Grand Vitara will be the newly-designed petrol engines; the latest version of the SUV will be powered by a choice of 2.4-litre four-cylinder and 3.2-litre V6 petrol engines to enhance performance. Further, driving will be made quieter by a redesigned powertrain and new acoustic materials; off-road performance will be improved by hill hold control and hill descent control (applicable to the five-door vehicles with the 3.2-litre petrol engine only); and braking performance will be improved with the adoption of rear disc brakes.

The new Grand Vitara will also get a jazzier and tougher look with new designs for the front grille and bumper accentuating the sportier exterior. In



addition, sporty, on-road-oriented 17-inch and 18-inch aluminium alloy wheels, outside door mirrors with built-in turn signal lamps, and new body colours add to the SUV's overall appeal.

"Ever since its launch, the Grand Vitara has maintained an impressive performance in markets around the world. The vehicle's overall performance both on and off road, elegant styling and superior comfort have been key factors that have attracted customers, and these are the very areas that we have focused on for the latest version. We are certain that customers in

the Middle East market will appreciate the modifications incorporated in the new Grand Vitara, as Suzuki reaffirms its strategy of constantly enhancing the quality and performance of its vehicles in line with customer expectations," said Takeo Fukuda, Group Leader, Middle East & Africa, Marketing Group (Automobile), Suzuki Motor Corporation.

Other changes to the Grand Vitara, incorporated to maximise comfort and convenience, include, an information display integrated into the meter cluster to provide the driver with accurate vehicle information; a revised design for the

air-conditioner control panel to improve operability; illumination added to the steering-wheel switches to improve visibility; an extension function for the sun visors and a slide function for the centre console armrest added to reduce driver and front-passenger fatigue; chrome-plated inside door openers and black wood-grain interior garnishes adopted for a stronger sense of sportiness in the cabin; and beige fabric seats and beige cabin trim, for five-door vehicles.

The Suzuki Grand Vitara can be proudly bought through Sabeha Trading Company, Suzuki's authorized distributor in Yemen.

1200 sqm of Italian fashion at smart prices The first OVS industry store in Yemen

OVS industry, the leading Italian fashion retailer, inaugurates its first store in Yemen in Siten Street in Sana'a.

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OVS industry offers to its customers collections that are renewed on a fortnightly basis and manufactured in compliance with the strictest rules of Social Responsibility.

For 36 years, OVS industry has been a reference point in the Italian clothing industry, thanks to its capacity for constant renewal and for capitalising on market evolution.

These new stores are part of an expansion plan which featured 17 openings abroad last year and entails the opening of around 20 stores in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East area by the end of 2008.

OVS industry was established in 1972 in Padua, where the very first store was opened.

For over 35 years its goal has been to offer the best products at the best price.

Now OVS industry is a reference point in the "fast fashion" industry, with a network of over 300 stores spread all over Italy and abroad, and has given shopping a new meaning, based on a constant renewal of fashion clothing, quality and smart prices. OVS industry headquarters is in Venice – Mestre.



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From rural to urban, the attractive choice for Yemeni youth: Part 2

Internal emigration from villages to cities is a global phenomenon. Especially with the development of long distance transportation and telecommunication that allows people to stay in touch despite the distances. *Almigdad Mojalli* investigates this phenomenon in a three part series researching why youth travel to the cities, how this has hanged them and what happens to their farms and families back home in the countryside.

The common reason behind most if not all of the Yemeni youth leaving the suburbs and taking to the cities is a dream for a better life. They carry high expectations financially, academically and socially.

Yet most of them go through a cultural shock in the new life style, especially if they have never been to the cities before.

A stranger in your own country

When some youth come to the city they are introduced to many new habits and social practices which make them feel as though they are strangers to this country. Many youth complained of being exposed to discrimination and made fun of because of their rural accent, way of dressing or lack of general knowledge. There are small things such as personal space and talking to girls or even greetings that vary significantly from the rural areas to the cities.

Ahmed Al-Emad, 57, a university graduate described how, when he was studying at Sana'a university, he once entered the doctors chamber asking about an Indian doctor,

"As I entered, I caught the shoulder of the Yemeni doctor and asked him about the Indian one. The doctor got angry and shouted at me and asked me to go out of his office," Al-Emad mentioned.

Abdulhakeem Al-Najdi, 24, a university graduate, explained that when he came from his village and joined Sana'a University in 2003 many

students refused to befriend him and some of them used to make fun of him.

"When I joined the university I didn't know how to dress well and had a crude way of speaking as we are used to in the mountains where I come from. Many students avoided befriendng with me and they used to make fun of me. It made me resent my time during college," he said adding, "This way of dealing continued for about seven months and affected me emotionally to the extent that I wanted to leave the university and go home."

As they explain it, rural men have a much simpler way of dealing with females. However, in the cities there are new rules to dealing with women and because of their ignorance, many of the rural men especially those coming from small communities fall into trouble with girls.

But not all youth coming from rural areas are ignorant. Many youth succeeded and not only achieved their aims but reached high positions. Naif Attam came to Sana'a in 1998 and has become a marketing manager for one of the biggest marketing technological companies in Yemen.

Finding a roof above your head

Despite a better education, more job opportunities, and ease of transportation and telecommunications that urban areas offer for youth, youth face many obstacles and difficulties that may lead them to deviation and loss.

The first obstacle that youth face when arriving at towns and cities is securing accommodation.

"Life in the village is much simpler.

One example is accommodation; we never had to pay rent because the houses are ours. Today, although I share a three bedroom apartment with seven other bachelors like myself, paying the rent is a monthly nightmare," said Ghaleb Mohammed a student at Sana'a University.

He described his ordeal of finding a place to live. Not many landlords would agree to rent to a bachelor or a group of young men. The perception was that young men are trouble makers and are a risk to the families in the neighborhood. Ghaleb reflected that he felt hurt and offended and very insecure because of this fact.

"It never occurred to me that there would be so much mistrust and precautionary measures. If we are late in paying rent, the landlord is furious as if we would never pay. He does not care that we promised to pay. Back home a man's word is enough," he complained.

Moreover, youth who enter cities are poor and don't have enough money to rent houses, so they gather and rent one room for five or six youth and live together.

When living in one room, youth don't have bathroom or toilets to wash and the public toilets are rare, especially in the poor zones that such youth live in. As a solution, they use the toilets of mosques.

Ahmed Al-Najjar, 23, who lives in one room with four other motorists, complains about the problem and is fed up with such a life. But he doesn't know of any other solution, as he is responsible for his siblings back in the village. He complained that they can go to toilets only during the day. They have baths only on Fridays because they work throughout the week.

A job to sustain your life

Searching for job comes next, even for those who have travelled to the cities for education. Many rural youth narrated how their naivety was



Some youth who travel from villages to the cities land up feeling a sense of isolation and exclusion because of their background and lack of skills which could have empowered them in a very competitive urban culture.

exploited by employers. They often spent a long time searching until they found work. As they didn't have good qualifications to enable them to get good paying jobs, they accepted any work they could find. The majority of them worked as qat sellers, motorists, butlers, laborers and construction workers.

Ali Mohammed, 26, left his land and three family members to work in Sana'a city in a raisins shop one and a half years ago. Ali explained that his backbone was hurt because of the constant carrying of big cargos of raisin to stores. "I worked in a shop of raisin for over one year and I was very oppressed by my manager and I couldn't find another alternative because I don't know where to go to find work,"

Ali was paid USD\$100 per a month and he had to carry more than have a ton of raisins every day. At the time of meals, he had to go to the market to bring them food and in the evening, he had to guard the shop until 01:00 am.

Get better education

Those who go to the cities for better education whether in high schools or universities face problems throughout the process. Most of the students coming from rural areas have a very weak background about the subjects that they study, especially in the scientific fields.

"I brought my son who studied in the secondary school in our village to study in the scientific department with his cousins in Sana'a, but he failed; he has a very weak background and

couldn't understand most of the lessons, especially the scientific ones," explained Mohammed Al-Ja'adabi, 52 years old.

Yet finding financial support is the main problem facing youth, as the living standards in the cities are much higher and keep rising.

"I know about twelve young men from my village in Al-Hada who dropped out of universities in the third and sometimes the fourth year because of money," Basheer Noman, 21, a student at Sana'a university revealed. "Some people in villages are enthusiastic to learn and think that studying at universities cost little money but they get tired after two or three years, especially when it doesn't rain and their farms don't have much yield," he added.

CSSW Family Development Sector: a model of a charity for women

By: Khalid Al-Hilaly

"Here, I feel like I am with my family, I don't feel that I am an orphan, the teachers are so kind," said Sabreen Al-Qubati, a 16-year-old Yemeni orphan who benefits from the orphan sponsorship project of The Family Development Sector (FDS), the branch of Charitable Society for Social Welfare for women.

Two years from now, when her orphan sponsorship ends as she reaches 18, Al-Qubati says she will miss the teachers and the family atmosphere she has been enjoying for the past four years, not the financial support.

At the Al-Ahmar Centre for Qualifying Women, the FDS premises

in Sana'a, female orphans and women from poor families learn professional skills together. Every day, groups of women gather in the building's rooms to learn the Quran, practice sewing on colorful patterned fabrics, develop their computer skills or study the English language.

In addition to her school curriculum, Al-Qubati acquired computer skills while at the centre and is now studying the Quran. She wants to study at university and aspires to become a lawyer.

Established in 1990 as a non-profit NGO, The FDS was previously a branch of the Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW). Although it continues to be supervised by the CSSW, nowadays it has its own financial and administrative system.

The FDS focuses on developing women and girl's abilities and empow-

ers them to improve their situation, as well as that of their families and the communities they live in. It has become a model for Yemeni charities and welfare associations and has gained trust from local and international donors through institutional charitable work.

The charitable activities carried out by the FDS have included sponsoring female orphans and supporting poor families by qualifying them to depend on themselves by learning a craft or even starting a small business. The Al-Ahmar Centre for Qualifying Women is a convenient and safe place for women and girls to learn and receive support to help them overcome hardships and be effective members of society. Jamila Al-Suraihi, 18, another orphan, doesn't worry that her FDS sponsorship will end soon now she has a craft that she can depend on for her livelihood: "I work well on a knitting machine and I can use sewing machine too."

With a mother working as a door-to-door sales woman, Al-Suraihi intends to help support her family with knitting when she leaves high school in one year's time. "Knitting is easy and like it," she added.

Girls at the sector talked about prizes they received from their teachers and the administration to encourage them to study and learn new skills.

The orphans receive school bags, health treatment, and monthly allowances in addition to Eid clothes and gifts. They also participate in training courses, cultural and educational activities and trips.

"After conducting field research

about the family, woman or orphan, we start looking for sponsors to support them" said, Ebtisam Al-Nihmi, head of Family Development Sector.

Local sponsors are businessmen, banks, companies, schools, teachers, and sheikhs, but the orphans also benefit from sponsors outside Yemen including international charity associations and individuals from Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the U.S., and the UK, and orphans tend to receive better support than other beneficiaries, according to Al-Nihmi.

"Sponsors are able to supervise the activities they finance," Al-Nihmi said, "for example a donor can sponsor an orphan studying English by calling him from time to time to follow his English language development."

"Some wives of sheikhs and prominent people of the community, such as one of the daughters of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hessian Al-Ahmar, do a great job supporting activities of the sector," she added.

Atika, one of the beneficiaries of the family support program at FDS, expressed how she had no idea about sewing before attending classes at the FDS. "They taught me how to use a sewing machine, take measurements and cut fabric. Now, I am able to work to send my daughters to school and university."

Atika advised less fortunate women to improve their lives by learning a skill like sewing to support their families.

Ashwaq Hussein is a 17-year-old orphan who dropped out of school to get married. Sponsored by the FDS, she has learned sewing and embroi-



Every day, groups of women gather in the building's rooms to learn the Quran.

dery, and the FDS has even given her an embroidery machine to use at home.

Besides supporting orphans and poor families by providing them with useful skills, the FDS also raises awareness of health related issues, notably family planning.

According to Al-Nihmi, mother of three, Islam encourages family planning as the Quran asks mothers to breastfeed their babies for two years.

Healthcare is one of the major concerns of the FDS and it provides less fortunate patients with financial and medical support and organizes health awareness programs to educate Yemeni women on topics such as HIV prevention.

"We also hold awareness courses on health issues like family planning and prevention from diseases," explained Al-Nihmi.

FDS also seeks to promote a moderate religious environment in society.

"We have presented lectures on bal-

anced preaching to female religious guides who work in mosques or teach the Quran," she said.

The FDS runs more than ten educational and training centers for women in Sana'a to focus on illiteracy eradication and teach sewing, knitting, handicrafts, computer skills and accounting.

From 1990 until 2007, almost 400 girls have received training in IT skills and accounting through the FDS. The program has helped train 636 women in human development and communication skills, and 174 women have participated in family management courses while 17,715 women learned to sew with the project's support. 184 women took part in a carpet weaving project and 2,655 women learned handicrafts and embroidery through.

"Our health services have spread all over Yemen," said Al-Nihmi, "Our plan is to reach remote rural areas with all our services including training programs for orphans and women."



The charitable activities carried out by the FDS have included sponsoring female orphans and supporting poor families by qualifying them to depend on themselves by learning a craft or even starting a small business.

Men behaving badly

In a landmark court case, an Egyptian man was sentenced to three years in jail on Tuesday for sexually harassing a woman in the street. The verdict is an unexpected victory for women's rights activists who have been fighting for years to convince a reluctant media to bring up the issue. In Cairo, MENASSAT spoke with plaintiff Noha El-Ostaz and activists about Egypt's dirty secret.

By: Alexandra Sandels
Menassat

On Tuesday, October 21, Sherif Gomaa was sentenced to three years in prison with hard labor for groping 27-year-old filmmaker Noha El-Ostaz on a street in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis last June. Gomaa, a van driver, was also ordered to pay El-Ostaz 5,001 Egyptian pounds (\$894) in compensation.

Women's rights activists in Egypt are hailing the ruling as the first victory for a woman in such a court case.

"It was definitely a surprise. Even the lawyers thought he would be given a maximum of one year in jail," Engy Ghoslan from the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights (ECWR) told MENASSAT over the phone from Cairo on Wednesday.

"The judge was setting an example in this ruling. Now people will think twice before groping a woman," Ghoslan said.

Groped from a van

Just last week, MENASSAT met with the plaintiff in the case, Noha El-Ostaz.

She recounted how she was on her way home on that June night when she was suddenly groped from a passing van.

"A guy showed up with his van... He rolled down the window and put his hand out. He crossed the street with his car and pulled up next to me and groped me. I tried to open his door but he had locked it. So I climbed up on another car and onto the truck," El-Ostaz told MENASSAT.

Onlookers gathered at the scene, but few did anything to help her.

"People were just standing there. I was telling one man that I had been sexually harassed. He asked me laughingly what that meant."

El-Ostaz managed to drag Gomaa to the police station after an hour-long tussle on the street in which she refused



Noha El-Ostaz. © BBC

to let go of Gomaa's side mirror.

To add insult to injury, when El-Ostaz and Gomaa entered the police station the officer on duty refused to open an investigation without her father present – despite the fact that she was 27-years old and no longer considered a minor under Egyptian law.

"He told me that it was for my own safety and reputation. Here I was with my attacker! I told him he was obligated to open an investigation!"

El-Ostaz' experience was only one incident in what has become a very common thing for Egyptian women.

A study published by the ECWR recently claimed that 83 percent of Egyptian women have been subjected to sexual harassment of some kind.

The ECWR said that only about 12 percent out of 2,500 women who complained to the organization actually went to the police to complain.

The report also suggested that more conservative dress-styles were not a deterrent to harassment. In fact, the survey concluded that the majority of harassed women were veiled.

Yet, until recently, the mainstream Egyptian media rarely reported about



According to a recent study, 83 percent of Egyptian women have been subjected to sexual harassment of some kind. R.R.

sexual harassment cases.

Black Sunday

When El-Ostaz told her story on the show Tissaen Daqqa on the Egyptian cable channel Mehwar, her appearance attracted a significant amount of feedback, although most of it was negative.

"Many people called in saying they found what I was saying provocative. This is my life story. They should respect it," said El-Ostaz.

Still, El-Ostaz's case has forced the

its way to the Egyptian blogosphere, and from there to the international and Egyptian media.

Most recently, a group of up to 150 young men is said to have physically attacked five female pedestrians in Cairo's Mohandiseen area during this year's Eid El-Fitr, tearing some of their clothes off.

News reports claim that up to 38 of the attackers were arrested, but that 30 of them were released soon thereafter for lack of evidence. None of the women attacked have been identified.



Egyptian media to take note and has helped increase awareness about a previously taboo topic, says the ECWR's Ghoslan.

In fact, the topic has even become something of a media hype lately.

"International media, independent media, and now even government-supported media like Al-Ahram have covered this year's awareness day for sexual harassment," said Ghoslan.

It is a far cry from the dark days of 2005, when the subject was considered taboo.

"Back then, anyone who wrote about harassment was attacked in the press. Writers from the opposition and bloggers were called liars," Goslan said.

In May 2005, on what is now referred to as "Black Sunday," a number of female journalists and political activists were physically and sexually harassed during a demonstration on Egypt's referendum day.

It was the first in a string of incidents that would slowly make their way into the mainstream media.

Two years ago, a large mob of young men started assaulting women, groping them and tearing their clothes off, in the center of Cairo during Eid El-Fitr, the feast to end the Ramadan fasting period. Police stood by without intervening.

Video footage of the incident made

The increasing number of serious incidents, the heightened number of complaints from both Egyptian and foreign women, combined with ECWR's report, have made it increasingly hard for anyone to deny the existence of the issue, says Ghoslan.

Blaming the victim

As a result, a number of groups have found the courage to raise awareness about sexual harassment through media campaigns.

Some of these campaigns, however, have raised controversy because they appear to be blaming the victim rather than the perpetrator.

In an email that was recently circulated among Egypt's blogging and activist communities, a photomontage depicted two bright red lollipops: one of them covered in a wrapper; the other, uncovered and swarmed by flies.

"You can't stop them, but you can protect yourself," reads the body of the email from an unknown sender.

The candy wrapper montage

A similar montage showing two pieces of candy was also widely circulated via email, including as stickers on billboards and in Cairo's subway.

The candy wrapper montage is said to be the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood. MENASSAT asked the Brotherhood's Essam El Arian for a reaction.



The candy wrapper montage is said to be the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood

MENASSAT: So the posters are from the Brotherhood, correct?

ESSAM EL ARIAN: "Not by the Brotherhood... By other groups."

MENASSAT: But they are signed by the Brotherhood?

EL ARIAN: "Maybe some groups in the Brotherhood say that this is an invitation to veil."

MENASSAT: What do you say to that?

EL ARIAN: "That is an idea from them – ijthad – to get more women to veil. Harassment or not, it is an order from God for women to wear the hijab."

MENASSAT: Do you then approve of this campaign to put the blame on women?

EL ARIAN: "They don't put the blame on women. They just invite them to protect themselves from harassment. You can do that. That is not blaming women."

MENASSAT: So it is just an invitation?

EL ARIAN: "Of course."

MENASSAT: But why not attack the men instead?

EL ARIAN: "There are also posters that urge men to respect themselves."

El Arian was probably referring to a recent campaign started by the Egyptian youth magazine Kelemetna that focuses on the perpetrators of sexual harassment and not the victims.

Under the slogan, "Respect yourself: Egypt still has real men," the campaign seeks to deter men from sexually harassing women, and to confront harassers whenever they spot them.

Rights groups such as ECWR have taken a different approach: relentlessly lobbying for the implementation of a law criminalizing sexual harassment.

No bill has been passed so far, but new legislation proposed by Egypt's National Council for Women (NWR) is currently in the legal pipeline.

ECWR held a round table discussion

on the proposed draft bill on Tuesday.

"Yesterday, on the same day as the court sentence, we sat down with legal experts and members of Parliament to discuss it," said Ghoslan.

Yet, she believes other measures might be needed to reach a long-term solution. "Implementing a law is a good short-term solution, but the long-term solution starts with the kids. You have to teach them that sexual harassment is not something acceptable. Hopefully, we will soon have generations thinking differently."

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The challenges facing women's sports in Yemen

By: Salah Alwarafy
For the Yemen Times

Yemeni sports have had a challenging journey since the first time a Yemeni team participated in an international competition until today. The first international participation was when the Republic of Yemen Football team participated in the Arab Football competitions in Cairo, Egypt in the early seventies.

Al-Tilal Football Club in Aden is considered one of the oldest in the region, and has participated in many regional and international competitions.

Table tennis was the highlight of Yemeni sports, when sportsman Ahmed Zaid won regional championships for the country.

Women's sports officially started in Yemen in the year of 2000 in Aden, when women were encouraged to participate in Chess and Judo. Yemeni athletes in Judo have won regional

the foreign occupation. Yemeni girls from the southern cities have reached advanced positions at the Arab and regional levels in different Olympic games. After a suspension of women's sports which lasted for a few years, women's sport activities restarted once again in 2005, and were practiced by large numbers of Yemeni ladies all around the country. The most important games currently practiced by ladies are chess, table tennis, volleyball, handball, basketball, judo, and gymnastics.

According to Mansour al-Jaradi, a sports analyst, Yemeni sportswomen face various challenges in their pursuit of sports because of traditions, financial support, lack of female teams and lack of specialists in women's sports among many other issues.

Al-Jaradi pointed out that the complete failure to administer sports in the Ministry of Youth & Sports is a basic reason for why women's sports have not had their share of attention. "Merging all women's associations into one association has failed to develop women's sports", he said.

Yemeni society is traditional, male-dominated and conservative, women face obstacles in all fields, especially those that have to do with the public domain.

Luxury or profession

Even though there are a few successful examples of Yemeni women in the sports field, the fact remains that they have taken to this field as a hobby. The society and even concerned authorities share this view, mainly because there are more urgent priorities that the country faces in terms of health services, education and employment. The practice of sports is still considered a form of luxury in Yemen rather than a serious profession.

Amatal Al-Rahman Jahaf, chairwoman of the Women's Association of Sports in Taiz and the headmistress of Arwa School, said that women's sports in Yemen are neglected.

"We lack financial support, female trainers, and adequate infrastructure, such as closed sports halls, are only a few of the reasons why there are not many women in Yemen who practice sports," she said.

She added that sports as a subject is not included in the curricula in schools, and if there is a sports class the students are usually left to wander in the school yard doing nothing.

"Schools are the first place to discover and nurture talents," she explained.

Jahaf said that society does not have an awareness of the significance of sports for health. "Society rejects and prevents women from playing sports, because it would mean going outdoors," she added.

Mohammad Amin Ghaleb, the General Secretary of "Sport for All" program in Taiz, agreed that the main obstacles against women sports are lack of financial support, sports-covered halls, and female teams. "There is not enough equipment for sportswomen", he said.

An investigation revealed that Yemeni sportswomen were reluctant to answer questions about female sports, although one sportswoman, on condition of anonymity, admitted that Yemeni sportswomen do face a lot of problems.

"Most Yemeni clubs do not care about the women athletics; or rather, they eliminate the women's sports from their activities.

Women athletics lack support, society has a negative perception of sportswomen," she said.

Different perceptions:

Many younger Yemenis have a more positive attitude towards sports in general and women's sports in particular.

"We watch them on many satellite channels, even Al-Jazeera Sports Channel and we see many women from Muslim countries participating in sports. I have even seen women wearing Hijab running tracks," said Basma Abdulmajeed, an 11th grade student.

As to whether she would like to follow their example, she said she would rather play table tennis because her brother had taught her table tennis and she could practice it in many clubs in Sana'a.

Hani Al-Shaibani, a 24 year-old student, said that he does not object to women playing sports, but he objects to where they should play sports, "If we do not accept women to work outside home, how can we accept that they play sports outside the home?" he wondered. He concluded that women should do exercises at homes.

But Jalal Saleh, a 27 year-old accountant, went further when he said women should never play sports at all. "Sports are for men only", he said, "and there is no room for women to play sports, because no one can be convinced to show his sisters or daughters to others," he explained.

On the other hand, Sahar Abdu Ali, a 21-year-old student, said that she could not practice sports because of the society's outlook towards women. Asked whether she could do exercises at home or not, she said no.

A general problem?

Al-Jaradi said that women's sports would never be developed unless the mindsets of those administering the Ministry of Youth & Sports changes. He said that there should be a conscious vision of how to administer the Associations.



Most of the girls practice in indoor halls and are usually from Aden or Taiz governorates are the culture there is more open and allows girls to participate in sports more publically.

"Women's athletics will never develop unless men's athletics develop," he said.

But Mohammad Ghaleb said that to overcome the major obstacles, there should be more financial support. "If there is financial support, we can establish covered sports halls, provide athletic equipments, and train female teams and specialists," he said.

Adding to the list of recommendations, Jahaf suggested that attention must be given to including sports in education for both boys and girls. She pointed out that Islam urges Muslims to train children in sports, as the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Train your children in archery, swimming, and horse riding". She explained that "children" here indicates both boys and girls.



Marshal Art's champions, many female athletes won the country medals in regional competitions.

contests and they were from Aden.

Naseem Ahmad al-Milaiki, Head of the Woman and Sports Group at the Yemeni Olympic Committee commented that the movement of women's sports in Yemen has had a long history dating back to the period prior to

Because of lack of financing, inadequate coaching and a sedentary lifestyle imposed by long hours of qat chewing daily sessions, not many Yemenis have had the opportunity to practice or take up sports as a profession.

For women, it is even worse. Because



Ahlam Al-Sayaghi, Women Activities Officer at the General Union for Horse-riding, explained that many sports women did not participate in international competitions because they were obliged to take off the scarf which they refused to do.



Chess and table tennis are of the promienent sportsYemeni women participate in nationally and internationally.



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Words of Wisdom



Throughout most of the world, there is a trend. It has to do with raising the efficiency of managing public affairs. The catch phrase is 'good governance'.

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

OUR
OPINIONRain, rain
and more rain

The storm affecting our region and especially the coastal areas has caused at least 50 deaths and many damages in lands and infrastructure. Even in Sana'a, there is so much rain in the streets and the drainage system is screaming under the pressure especially the water purification station in Al-Rawda district in Sana'a. A lone station that breaks down every time there is a natural disaster of the like, leaving the district's air exploding with a rotten smell.

Yet in the same time there is hardly any water in the government water network, especially around Hadda and the diplomatic area where residents have to buy domestic water adding yet another expense to the increasing cost of living. Such an irony makes us wonder how come there is so much water all around and yet not in our taps. We are using underground water that had been stored for decades for our toilets and irrigation while we could have stored and used rain water for such purposes instead.

It is not just about domestic water. We don't have an adequate system in place when in normal times, how are we going to survive when disaster strikes like today? And what if this is a first in a series?

The damages caused by the storm to the infrastructure have set the stricken governorates years behind. Roads, buildings, bridges and all kinds of infrastructure have been damaged one way or the other. There is concern that Shibam historical city – the ancient skyscrapers – which is a UNESCO reserved landmark is getting severely damaged by the storm and some of the buildings have actually been eaten away by the rain and wind. Socotra, the beautiful island in the Indian Ocean, also a natural heritage site, has been drenched completely, and the people who usually live there in huts and slums are no homeless. Their livelihood depends mainly on animal livestock and some farming, and both of these assets if not completely ruined are affected largely.

Sometimes I wonder if God is sending us a message telling us to quit fooling around and be more honest in handling our country otherwise we would land up with leftovers of a country rather than the so-called Arabian Felix. There is so much corruption, misuse of resources, irresponsible terrorist acts and now even natural disasters.

It feels like the Pharos when they did not believe in Moses's call to God and were sent the seven signs yet they did not surrender. We have been sent many signs and we suffer from them everyday but we are not sure who our Moses of today is, otherwise I am sure we would surrender. Because unlike the Pharos who were strong and mighty, we are desperate and really need guidance to the extent that we would follow behind any credible leader. Just let him (or her) show-up and lead the way.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

By: Abdurrahman Bajjash

The whole world is currently undergoing an unprecedented financial crisis that reminds the elderly of what happened in 1929, which was also known as "Year of Economic Recession". According to economic and political analysts, the economic recession of 1929 was caused by the Zionist Rochfield family that originated from Germany with the intention to control stock markets and hit them whenever it wants.

Other Zionist families did the same thing with intention of achieving specific objectives that are clearly states in the books of "Invisible World Governments" or "Stones on the Chessboard".

Where are the Arabs and Muslims? The spontaneous answer to this question is that the Arabs exist only in the form of pillars to

support the American republicans. Despite the fact that the Arabs account for 50 percent of the total voters in the U.S. State of Michigan, they began to back the democrats as an immediate reaction to the Republican Presidential Candidate John McCain's campaign, which started to attack the Democratic Presidential Candidate Barack Obama and his father Hussein through the help of Arabs and Muslims.

As a result the democratic presidential candidate felt obliged to deny having his father's name as Hussein as if it will incur a big shame on him.

The Arabs in the State of Michigan attempted to retaliate by themselves while the other original Arabs and Muslims never thought about retaliating for what they have lost in the U.S. banks.

Even worse, the allegation made by Collin Powell, who insulted himself by declaring from the United Nations that there had been

communications between senior Iraqi officers confirming the presence of weapons of mass-destruction in Iraq, was proved wrong and inauthentic. Consequently, Powell tried to reconsider himself having realized that he was deceived, and that intelligence agents and conservatives provided him with tapes uncovering the scandal. The then U.S. Administration attempted to engage other states like Nigeria in the crisis.

Now, Collin Powell, which is affiliated with the Republican Party, realizes that the campaign launched by his party for its presidential candidate McCain committed a mistake when it insulted Obama because of his Arab and Islamic origin. Powell justified his charge against his own party by saying that the way McCain behaved during the campaign may lead to the killing of more American citizens worldwide.

The Arabs and Muslims seem to be absent all the time. And the Arab League did not invite

the scattered Arab states to come together in a meeting and discuss impacts of the global financial turmoil. So, is it possible for the league to bring together people having no economic relations?

It is time for the original Arabs to be frank and admit that they are a group of states. They should also admit that their foreign relations with the western states are stronger than the internal relations between themselves as Arabs. The clearest evidence in support of this is that the Arab League couldn't have taken any effective decision to solve any pressing problems faced by some Arab states. The global financial crisis disclosed that the American support for Israel, which is exaggerated, is meant to encourage Israel to work harder and harder in order for the Arabs to remain backward, intimidated and scattered groups.

Source: Al-Thawra Stat-run Daily

Removing U.S. Embassy from
the neighborhood is a legal right

By: Hamdan Al-Aleyi

Undoubtedly, we have certain duties to do for the sake of our neighbor, Embassy of the United States of America in Sana'a, which is part of the neighborhood's rights and duties. According to Prophet Mohammed (Peace be Upon Him), ethics of a Muslim individual must be positively reflected on the way he deals with a Jewish neighbor, who frequently insults him and throws waste in front of his house. The Prophet Mohammed had been peaceful and lenient while dealing with non-Muslim residents even if they proved to have been insulting Muslims.

There are certain issues, which we must not ignore or be careless while dealing with, most notably as such issues arose at the expense of public peace and interests of residents living near the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a. There are simple solutions to such a problem and these solutions may be limited to the statement "Removing the embassy" not "disbanding the

embassy".

Human armor to protect the embassy

We suffer a great harm. We will no longer tolerate our interests being hurt on the ground. The damage is worse than the cost paid for these events, which we don't have connections with. We strongly believe that we, as residents in the vicinity of the U.S. Embassy, have become a human armor to protect the U.S. Embassy in our zone.

Why the embassy is not removed from such a densely populated area to another scarcely populated area that seems to have no houses, schools, institutes, parks or trade stores. Having been removed, the embassy will be more fortified and people's civil interests will be securer.

What is the sin of those trade shops' owners whose sales were negatively affected following blockage of the road starting from Sheraton Hotel Intersection through the Tourist City until the Sa'awan City? What is the sin of those living between two security cordons in order for them to suffer a lot while

attempting to reach their homes via farer alternative roads?

Which sin committed by women, who get intimidated thousand times per day when hearing even the sounds of firecrackers in streets since they usually fear that the Embassy may be under attack. They fear that any attack targeting the U.S. Embassy may affect their homes in the same neighborhood, thus killing or wounding children before the elderly. Which sin may be attributed to schoolgirls enrolled in the school near the embassy?

What is the sin of children, who have been deprived of playing in a public park near the embassy? What is the sin of children, who have been deprived of moving between homes in the neighborhood and rewarded with automobile fossil and terrible accidents? This is the direct result of changing directions of any incoming cars from the main street in front of the embassy's building into small feeders inside the residential area.

Which sin may be attributed to foreigners working in Yemen and others residing in the Tourist City in order to fear being attacked like

what happened to an innocent Indian victim in the most recent terrorist attack against the Embassy while she was walking in the street?

Think about removing the embassy into another area

I am not intending to calculate, assess and record sufferings of those intimidated citizens living in the same neighborhood where the U.S. Embassy is located because I am not able to calculate all the physical, moral and material damage in a single article. However, I would like to highlight some of the sufferings, which are endured only by those who are neighbors of the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a.

I urge residents of the area to loudly voice their concerns and sufferings on a daily basis as they may persuade all those involved to think about removing building of the U.S. Embassy into another safer area. This is a workable solution that may help make the embassy well fortified and consider people's interests.

Source: Al-Masdar.com

Boycotting the elections is a democratic practice

By: Nazar Al-Abbadi

Freedom granted to individuals and groups are viewed as the spirit of democracy, which the national options are based on. However, these freedoms, even if they are governed by certain legislations and regulations, remain unable to translate popular ambitions on the ground if they ignore the moral values related with how to practice them.

The main problem faced by democracies of developing countries is related with how political parties and organizations in these countries practice their democratic rights and freedoms. They practice their rights and freedoms within frames of partisan loyalty that don't differ from the tribal fanaticism, which was known during the Pre-Islam Era (Era of Ignorance).

Like generations of the Pre-Islam Era, Parties and organizations in developing countries build their options and decisions on malicious considerations, thereby granting a seemingly absolute immunity to irresponsible allegiance under the guise of tribal affiliation. This is the main reason why such behaviors lacked the simplest ethical values, and therefore Islam gave a top priority to fighting this kind of behavior.

The strange contradiction between the contemporary philosophy and the type of culture, practiced by some political parties infected Yemen with chronic trouble and broke any existing relation between democracy and development. Democracy turned to be a source of conflicts, seditions and political chaos that are inevitable to hinder any devel-

opment programs and produce numerous challenges to Yemen's national sovereignty.

When participation in the elections is accepted for the purpose of opportunistic projects and deals at the expense of national unity as eyed by Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), it undoubtedly destroys any democratic transformations made on the ground, as well as erases all the philosophical meanings on the basis of which democracy was established.

Democracy with values

Behaving this way while the nation is facing dangerous challenges such as terrorism, sea piracy and international conspiracy to internationalize the Red Sea, this means that our democracy has lost its moral values. Nothing will remain relevant to democracy except for conspiracy and treason irrespective of factors and pretexts provided by those opposition parties to justify their practices.

A few days ago, the JMP member parties declared to boycott the upcoming parliamentary elections, and therefore distributed a statement to its branches and fans countrywide urging them to instigate citizens to boycott the elections too. They denied the fact that democracy exists in Yemen.

These parties should remember that boycotting the elections is a democratic right like deciding to participate in them. Boycotting the elections proves the broad scope of freedoms granted to all political parties and organizations in Yemen.

JMP's declaration to boycott the upcoming electoral process means that the opposition coalition selected an anti-democracy option. It prefers violence to dialogue and bloody coup

d'état against the regime to the peaceful transfer of power via ballot boxes.

The most dangerous thing is that the opposition coalition declares rebellion against Constitution of the Unified Republic of Yemen that legalized electoral practices for the sake of achieving peaceful transfer of power and representing people.

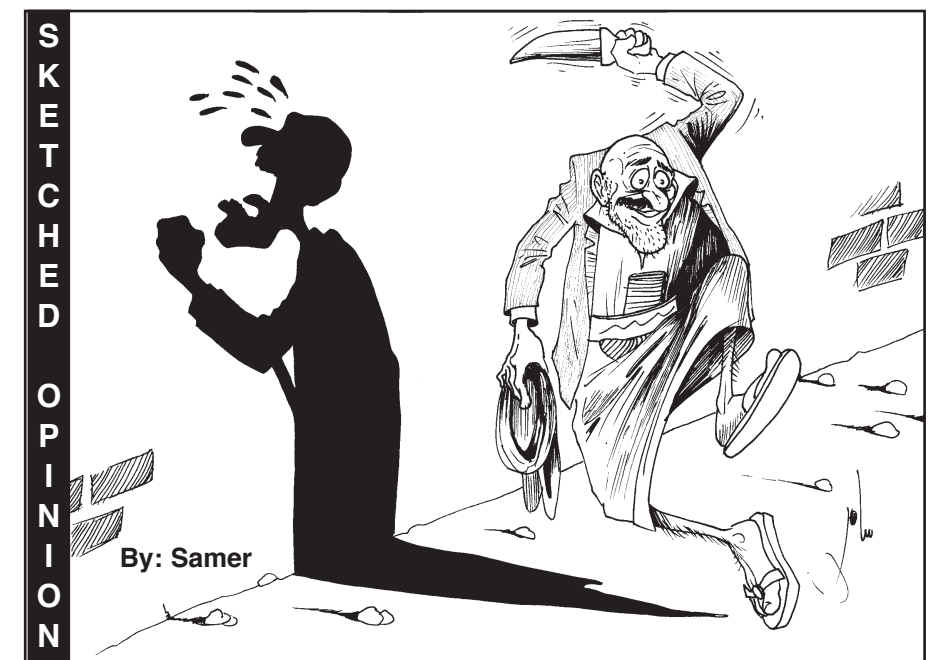
Two options before the government

Such a step is a dangerous development because it makes the state before two options: First, the government should violate the Constitution and laws in order to make illegal and unconstitutional deals with JMP for

power-sharing. Second, the government should take a decision to freeze democracy and Political Parties and Organizations Law, currently placed in effect, and resort to the traditional arbitration system in order not to let the opposition parties hurt Yemen's sovereignty.

The government may adopt the second option if it wants to confront any malicious attempts, which aimed at fueling seditions in the nation and driving wheels of development backward, particularly after the opposition parties raised slogans advocating secession.

Source: Al-Gumhuria.net



By: Samer

YEMEN TIMES

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First Political bi-weekly English Newspaper in Yemen. Founded in 1990 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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Yemen Press Review



Al-Eshteraki.net, affiliated with Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP)
Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2008

Top Stories

- Al-Qaeda resorts to using booby-trapped packages, kills a Marib security official
- A YSP leader escapes assassination attempt in Al-Dhalea
- YSP accuses ruling party of deceiving democracy

The YSP Central Committee released a statement last week, accusing ruling General People's Congress (GPC) of deceiving democracy, assassinating YSP leaders and allying with terrorist groups, the website reported.

"YSP constructed a pioneering experience, the first of its kind in the region, the most prominent sights of which are offering education and medical services to all social groups for free, and, enhancing general security and stable living conditions," the statement reads. "It is the first time to see an Arab country (once South Yemen) eradicating illiteracy in its entire territory, thanks to YSP policies and efforts."

Most of the time, the statement praised achievements, which had been once reached in South Yemen under the YSP reign, indicating that the party resisted any hostile policies against the Arab states, most notably Palestine and the Palestinian Issue.

"In brief, the July 7 Authority destroyed the peaceful and voluntary

unity and converted it into coercive affiliation. This authority placed the entire nation under social backwardness, political oppression and ethical bankruptcy. This authority takes Yemen back to age of oppressive and tyrannous regimes that already ended in the past," the statement continued.

It added, "Defeating the democratic unionist project on July 7, 1994 is not the end of history. Rather it is a new round in the long battle between progress and backwardness, between the right and the wrong. These days, Yemeni people are experiencing indicators of the inevitable collapse of the tyrannous and deceptive authority."

"Eliminating consequences of the war, putting a decisive end to internal wars and addressing the issue of South Yemen is the primary approach to a comprehensive national reform, plus carrying out a full package of political, constitutional and economic reforms," the statement reads. "The 1994 War was fomented by looting-related interests and desire to control power."

The statement went on to say, "In Yemen, we need to boost the democratic course by conducting serious election reforms that may help apply peaceful transfer of power, establish a real national partnership, fight corruption and punish corrupt individuals, and direct economic policies toward serving the vital interests of people."

"YSP still is invited to occupy its real status at the heart of a national battle against backwardness and oppression in cooperation with other political partners in the JMP. It is time for the YSP and its real partners to revolt against the July 7 Authority," the statement concluded.



Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party
Thursday, Oct. 23, 2008

Top Stories

- Aden-based National Consultation Committee denounces assassination attempt on top YSP leader
- Parliament demands government clarify reasons behind piracy and why Yemen's U17 Football Team was eliminated by AFC
- JMP: Plan to annul multi-party system is a coup against democracy

Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) has appreciated the reaction demonstrated by its members and supporters toward its call for boycotting the current election commission and its voter registration committees, the website reported, adding that the opposition coalition said in a meeting on Monday that any threat to eradicate multiparty system is a coup against political and democratic development, achieved by Yemeni Reunification.

JMP also affirmed that the current election commission is illegal and only represents the ruling party. It discussed some issues set in its scheme, stressing the necessity of continuing struggle for the sake of protecting the Constitution, law, democracy, justice and fighting corruption.

On a side note, the website reported that Judicial sources recently revealed Chairman of Retirees Association

Abdu Al-Maatari and Head of Jobless Youth Association were sentenced to one year in prison on charges of establishing associations without having licenses.

Al-Maatari told Sahwa.net that he only knew that a sentence was issued against him on Saturday though it was issued on July, labeling the sentence as "a politicized verdict".

He further noted that the court verdicts aim to end peaceful and political activities in Dhalea and other provinces, vowing to call the association staff for an extraordinary meeting to discuss the unfair verdict.

According to the website, Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) has accused the ruling General People's Congress (GPC) of violating democracy, unity principles, adding that the ruling party failed to resolve Yemen's pressing problems.

On its 30th Anniversary last Tuesday, YSP affirmed that GPC stayed adhering to conventional behaviors which it used to practice and resorted to assassinate top YSP leaders of and foment violence.

YSP explained that GPC foiled the search of solutions to the recent united state's problems and used weapons as means to settle political and ideological disagreements.

It further described 1994 war as criminal in all social, national and moral levels, pointing out that the perpetrators of the war incited culture of hatred, violence and backwardness.

YSP called for eradicating all the impacts of 1994 war settle internal wars, addressing the southern issue, achieving a package of political, constitutional and economic reforms ,

forming a comprehensive national draft to build a modern state of law and order and promoting democracy via carrying out serious reforms, which may enhance peaceful transfer of power and exterminate rampant corruption.



Al-Motamar.net, affiliated with General People Congress (Ruling Party)
Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2008

Top Stories

- As man as 22 international observers to monitor voter registration process
- Abyan Security Department denies officer's injury in gunfire
- GPC Media officer warns JMP against hurting national unity

Head of the Information Office at the General People's Congress (GPC) Tareq Al-Shamisaid Monday the unity of the homeland is bigger than the political parties and partisanship has acquired its legitimacy with the establishment of the unity on 22 may 1990, the website reported. He warned the opposition parties against hurting the national unity and democracy.

He was quoted as saying that parties that threaten to divide the homeland and target its interests and unity lose their legitimacy that came with the reunification of the homeland. According to Al-Shami, These parties need to be reconsidered as they have violated the bases that granted them legitimacy.

"Democracy is not sabotage and dismemberment of the homeland. It is not the instigation of sedition and conflicts and exciting hatred among the society in addition to fomenting secessionist tendencies," Al-Shami continued.

The GPC official went on to say, "The Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) excluded themselves from the political process and tried to impede the democratic course and performance of constitutional institutions. They have refused to indulge into dialogue on the system of comprehensive political reforms, whether those related to the constitutional amendments concerning the development of the political system in Yemen or regarding the legal amendments to transfer of the local governance, Political Parties and Organizations Law, the Press and Publication Law or other laws related with human rights and freedoms."

According to Al-Shami, the opposition coalition attempted to hinder approval the Generla Elections Law and the formation of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) despite the big concessions the GPC offered, the opportunities the parliament granted to the political forces and the extension of its sessions many times for fifty days for the first time in its history, which reached no result."

The GPC senior information official has affirmed that leaderships of the JMP had proposed postponing the upcoming parliamentary elections several times, adding that their proposals were rejected. Al-Shami warned the opposition coalition against any acts that are intended to harm homeland's unity, security, stability.

From Christian Democracy to Muslim Democracy?

By: Jan-Werner Mueller

This summer, Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) narrowly escaped being banned by the country's constitutional court. State prosecutors alleged that the party was trying to "Islamicize" the country and ultimately introduce theocracy. Not only did AKP supporters celebrate after the decision, but those in the West who view it as a prototype "Muslim Democratic" party also breathed a sigh of relief.

The clear model for a moderately religious party – one committed to the rules of the democratic game – are the Christian Democratic parties of Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, Latin America. Yet opponents of the idea of "Muslim democracy" argue that European Catholics only turned to democracy under orders from the Vatican, and that since Muslims do not have anything like a Church hierarchy, Christian Democracy is an irrelevant example.

But history shows that political

entrepreneurs and liberalizing Catholic intellectuals were crucial to the creation of Christian Democracy. This suggests that Muslim reformers, given the right circumstances, might be similarly capable of bringing about Muslim democracy.

Christian Democratic parties first emerged in Belgium and Germany toward the end of the nineteenth century as narrowly focused Catholic interest groups. The Vatican initially regarded them with suspicion, perceiving parties participating in elections and parliamentary horse-trading as signs of "modernism."

A breakthrough came with the Italian Popular Party's founding in 1919. Its leader, Don Luigi Sturzo, wanted it to appeal to tutti i liberi e forti – all free and strong men. The Vatican, having prohibited Italian Catholics from participating in the political life of newly united Italy for almost sixty years, lifted its ban. But Mussolini soon outlawed the Popolari; in any event, the Vatican had had a strained relationship with the party and appeared more comfortable supporting pro-Catholic authoritarian regimes in

countries like Austria and Portugal.

But while Christian Democracy got nowhere politically between the World Wars, momentous changes were initiated in Catholic thought. In particular, the French Catholic thinker Jacques Maritain developed arguments as to why Christians should embrace democracy and human rights.

During the 1920's, Maritain was close to the far-right Action Française . But the Pope condemned the movement in 1926 for essentially being a group of faithless Catholics more interested in authoritarian nationalism than Christianity. Maritain accepted the Pope's verdict and began a remarkable ideological journey toward democracy.

He criticized France's attempts to appear as a modern crusader, incurring the wrath of Catholics in the United States in particular. More importantly, he began to recast some of Aristotle's teachings and medieval natural law doctrines to arrive at a conception of human rights. He also drew on the philosophy of "personalism," which was highly fashionable in the 1930's, as it sought a middle way between

individualist liberalism and communitarian socialism, and insisted that "persons" always had a spiritual dimension that materialistic liberalism supposedly failed to acknowledge.

After the fall of France, Maritain decided to remain in the US, where he happened to find himself after a lecture tour (the Gestapo searched his house outside Paris in vain). He authored pamphlets on the reconciliation of Christianity and democracy, which Allied bombers dropped over Europe, and he never tired of stressing that the Christian origins of America's flourishing democracy had influenced him.

Maritain also insisted that Christians, while they should take into account religious precepts, had to act as citizens first. Acceptance of pluralism and tolerance were thus central to his vision and forbade any one-to-one translation of religion into political life. He was in fact rather skeptical of exclusively Christian parties.

Maritain participated in the drafting of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and the Second Vatican

Council eventually approved many of the ideas that he had been propounding since the 1930's. He also influenced the Christian Democratic parties that governed after 1945 in Germany, Italy, the Benelux countries, and, to a lesser extent, France, and which consolidated not only democracy, but also built strong welfare states in line with Catholic social doctrine. While still emphasizing family values and traditional morality, they lost the whiff of incense that had clung to the Christian Democratic parties at the beginning of the century – by the 1970's, they even began to stress that one didn't have to be a believer to join.

Maritain's example disproves the claim that the analogy between Christian and Muslim democracy fails. It wasn't the Vatican that took the lead in creating Christian Democracy – it was innovative philosophers like Maritain (who never served in the Church hierarchy, though he was briefly French ambassador to the Vatican) and political entrepreneurs like Sturzo (a simple Sicilian priest).

Of course, Muslim democracy will not be brought about by intellectuals

alone. After all, Christian Democracy's success is also explained by its strongly anti-communist stance during the Cold War – and, in Italy, by the benefits of widespread corruption.

Nevertheless, some body of thought that makes democracy attractive for believers – and reassures non-believers that the faithful have accepted pluralism – had to be available. True, some of the philosophies used in the European Catholic transition to democracy – such as personalism – were rather nebulous, although it was probably their vagueness that helped to bring as many believers as possible on board. But the point remains that ideas matter. So the creation of a liberalized Islam by self-consciously moderate and democratic Muslim intellectuals is crucial.

Jan-Werner Mueller, a professor of politics at Princeton University, is currently an Open Society Fellow at the Central European University, Budapest. He is the author of Constitutional Patriotism. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org

Tuberculosis or Hair Loss? Refocusing Medical Research

By: Peter Singer

In an ideal world, the amount of money we spend on medical research to prevent or cure a disease would be proportional to its seriousness and the number of people who suffer from it. In the real world, 90% of the money spent on medical research is focused on conditions that are responsible for just 10% of the deaths and disability caused by diseases globally.

In other words, the diseases that cause nine-tenths of what the World Health Organization refers to as "the global burden of disease" are getting only one-tenth of the world's medical research effort. As a result, millions of people die every year from diseases for which no new drugs are in the pipeline, while drug companies pour billions into developing cures for erectile dysfunction

and baldness.

But blaming drug companies is too easy a response. They cannot justify developing new drugs unless they can expect to recoup their costs through sales. If they target diseases that affect affluent people, or people living in countries with national health insurance, they will be able to patent any new drugs they discover. For the 20 years that the patent lasts, they will have a monopoly on the drug's sale and be able to command a high price.

If drug companies target diseases that affect only people who are unable to pay high prices for drugs, they cannot expect to cover their research costs, let alone make a profit. No matter how much their directors may want to focus on the diseases that kill the most people, the current system of financial incentives means that if they did so, their shareholders would remove them, or

their companies would soon be out of business. That would help no one. The problem is with the system, not with the individuals who make their choices within it.

At a meeting in Oslo in August, Incentives for Global Health, a nonprofit organization directed by Aidan Hollis, professor of economics at the University of Calgary, and Thomas Pogge, professor of philosophy and international affairs at Yale, launched a radical new proposal to change the incentives under which corporations are rewarded for developing new medicines. They suggest that governments contribute to a Health Impact Fund that would pay pharmaceutical companies in proportion to the extent to which their products reduce the global burden of disease.

The fund would not replace existing patent laws, but would offer an alterna-

tive to them. Pharmaceutical companies could continue to patent and sell their products as they do now. Alternatively, they could register a new drug with the Health Impact Fund, which would set a low price based on the drug's manufacturing cost.

Instead of profiting from sales at high prices, the corporation would become eligible for a share of all payments made by the fund over the next ten years. The size of the share would be calculated by assessing the contribution the drug has made to reducing death and disability.

The beauty of the scheme is that it gives economic support to the idea that all human lives are of equal value. For products that drug companies register with the Health Impact Fund, corporations would get the same reward for saving the lives of Africans living in extreme poverty as they would get for saving the lives of wealthy citizens of

affluent nations.

The most potentially lucrative targets would become the diseases that kill the most people, because that is where a breakthrough drug would have the biggest impact on global health. Moreover, companies would have an incentive to produce and distribute drugs at the lowest possible price, because only when the poor could use them would the drug save the greatest possible number of lives. A company might choose to allow cheap generic copies of its drug to be made in developing countries, because that would enable it to be used more widely, and to save more lives – for which the Health Impact Fund would reward the company that registered it.

Hollis and Pogge estimate that about \$6 billion a year would be required to enable the Fund to provide a sufficient incentive for drug companies to register

products that target the diseases of the poor. That figure would be reached if countries accounting for one-third of the global economy – say, most European nations, or the United States and one or two small affluent nations – contributed 0.03 % of their gross national income, or three cents for every \$100 they earn. That's not a trivial sum, but it isn't out of reach, especially considering that affluent nations would also benefit from cheaper drugs and from medical research that was focused on reducing disease rather than on maximizing profits.

Peter Singer, Professor of bioethics at Princeton University, is a member of a University of Melbourne research team examining ethical aspects of intellectual property rights in medicines. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org



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

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

SUPPORT TO ACCOUNTANCY AND ADMINISTRATION (1 position)

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

1. Entry and follow-up of validation of legal entities, financial identification forms and invoices into the Delegation's accounting system
2. Data entry
3. Entry of Delegation's contracts into the Delegation's accounting system
4. Assistance in the reporting process to relevant parties
5. Assistance to the Accountants whenever necessary
6. Calculation of mission cost claims
7. Calculation of medical reimbursement claims
8. General administrative support upon instructions from the Chargé d'Affaires /Head of Administration

Qualifications and skills required:-

- ¥ Completed secondary education or above; Certified qualification in accounting.
- ¥ 3 years working experience minimum one year in Accounting.
- ¥ Excellent command of English and Arabic (oral and written); knowledge of a 2nd EU language is considered an advantage
- ¥ Excellent computer skills and ability to adapt readily to technological and software innovation
- ¥ Ability to work in a multi-cultural team; ability to work under pressure; high sense of responsibility and initiative; resourceful.
- ¥ Flexibility to work extra hours whenever necessary

Interested candidates are requested to send an application letter together with detailed curriculum vitae and copy of relevant diploma, certificates, etc. to:-

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

Applications received after 5th November 2008 will not be taken into consideration.

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BMW Driving Pleasure

The third eye in your car

By: **Rachelle Kliger**
The Media Line

An innovative warning system aims to make roads safer and dramatically cut down the number of traffic accidents worldwide. Mobileye, with its R&D based in Israel, has created a chip, which "recognizes" potential hazards on the road and issues audio warnings to the drivers. The product could one day become a compulsory feature in automobiles, much like seatbelts.

Motor vehicle "accidents" are the leading cause of "death by injury" in the world today and are recognized as a major and growing global health burden.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, in 2002 nearly 1.2 million people died in road crashes worldwide and between 20 and 50 million were injured.

In 2004 more than 40,600 people were killed in traffic accidents in the United States alone.

So when new technology is developed that promises to lower traffic death rates, it attracts serious attention.

A computer chip and a tiny camera not much bigger than a dime installed on the windshield behind your car's rear-view mirror may now make the difference between life and death.

The Netherlands-based Mobileye Vision Technologies has developed an inexpensive hi-tech driver assistance system called Mobileye AWS (advance warning system), which can provide drivers with early warnings of potential road hazards.

Founded by an Israeli, with its R&D based in Israel, the company says the system has the potential to lower accident rates and teach people how to be "smarter" drivers.

The images generated from a front-facing camera are analyzed by the system's computer chip, which has been "taught" to recognize potential hazards such as cars, buses, trucks, motorcycles and pedestrians, and uses audio warnings to aid the driver in recognizing and maintaining safe distances from these threats.

The chip, roughly the size of a Zippo lighter, has the processing capability of two Pentium computers but comes at a much lower price.

The aftermarket product line works day, night and in inclement weather, and features

Forward Collision Warning that prevents collision with vehicles ahead

by alerting drivers to both moving and stationary vehicles while filtering out cars in adjacent lanes that pose no threats.

Alerts are provided up to 2.7 seconds before collision – enough time to safely stop and avoid an accident.

It also features Headway Monitoring and Warning, providing distance indication to drivers and Lane Departure Warning that alerts drivers when they inadvertently drift from their lane due to drowsiness or other factors.

Other technologies in different stages of development include lane change assist that monitors the speed and distance of overtaking vehicles and tells you when it is safe to switch lanes, and pedestrian protection that identifies people in the vehicle's path as well as those on the sidewalk who may enter the roadway.

For example, the system detects the distance to the vehicle immediately ahead – generally targeted as posing the primary threat. As the driver nears the vehicle in front of him, an image on the display panel changes progressively from green to orange to red.

Upon advancing beyond a minimal safe following distance, the driver will hear an audio warning announcing that he or she must reduce speed and fall back. The audio caution will cease the moment the driver steps on the brakes.

Though there is a small display panel mounted on the vehicle's dashboard, most of the warnings are audible and the driver need not remove his or her eyes from the road in order to make use of the system.

"Studies by auto makers, government and non-government organizations have shown that giving sufficient warning can prevent up to 80 percent of all traffic accidents," Iftah Amit, VP for Sales and Aftermarket Products for Mobileye Vision Technologies told The Media Line.

"Mobileye is the only technology developer that provides the broadest range of accident prevention alerts in a single system," he said.

The company aims to provide optimal safety for every vehicle and not just for luxury cars. It uses inexpensive components to make it attractive both to automotive manufacturers and to the average car owner.

The final retail cost to the consumer is under \$1,000. The company is not disclosing figures on how many units of the product it has sold to date.

The system is the result of a

challenge thrown out to Mobileye co-founder and chairman of the board Prof. Amnon Shashua. After giving a lecture to one of the leading car companies in Japan, Shashua was asked if he would be able to develop an automotive vision system using two cameras.

He accepted the challenge, went back to his lab and soon discovered that he was able to do the job with just one camera.

Road testing of the system was conducted in Israel, Europe and the United States.

During development, Mobileye found there were no existing cameras that could deal with the complications posed by road travel, such as strong glare and rapidly moving shadows. The company was forced to develop its own camera and accompanying software.

The company is currently running a pilot program with the Dutch government in which the camera has been installed in 2,000 trucks, with a view to having it fixed in an additional one thousand.

As of 2007 Mobileye's systems have been installed in production vehicles on selected automakers' assembly lines in the hope it will eventually evolve into a standard auto safety feature.

The system has been installed into several models of BMW, Volvo and GM.

Mobileye Vision Technologies is also cooperating with insurance companies to bring down insurance costs because it does in effect prevent or at least reduce the number of traffic accidents.

Much like seatbelts, the company's product could one day be a compulsory safety feature required by insurance companies.

The product is currently sold in several countries, including the United States, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Australia and Chile, and is installed in both commercial and passenger vehicles.

Making sophisticated safety systems such as these a regulatory feature is probably just a matter of time, but whether Mobileye's development will be the leading product on the market depends on how much of an edge the company can maintain over its competitors, analysts in the motor industry say.

Nitzan Avivi, a technology writer for the Israeli Auto motor magazine, said the concept behind Mobileye's warning system was to create a cheaper alternative to radar-based safety systems, which up until 10

years ago were very costly.

"Today, the radar systems are not as expensive, and Mobileye's system isn't as low-priced as they thought it would be, although still cheaper than the radar system," Avivi says.

"So the economic justification has somewhat diminished, but it still has features that the radar system doesn't have and it does have a technological justification."

In terms of user-friendliness, Avivi praised the system as being "idiot-proof."

He reckons that eventually the safety systems that will most likely catch on will be those that combine both radar technology and imaging, such as a system that Volvo has already installed into some of its models.

"Ten years ago no one believed the

electronic stability program (ESP) would be regulatory and now it's mandatory in the United States and in Europe. In light of trials that have been carried out on both heavy vehicle fleets and private vehicles, I believe this system will be regulatory," he said. "Its impact on safety is significant and Mobileye will benefit because they'll be one of the alternatives."



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- Knowledge and experience in managing computer networks with HTML experience.
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The TV and Radio General Corporation

Extension announcement of the envelope opening of bid number 20/ 2008

The TV and Radio General Corporation announces the extension of the envelop opening date: bid number (20) for year 2008 for Renting a Lunar Satellite Channel to broadcast Yemen's Satellite Channel in addition to the general Radio-one and Radio-two programs to Asia, North America and Europe until **Wednesday (5/11/2008) as the envelopes will be opened at 11:00 AM of the same date at the corporation premises.**



The TV and Radio General Corporation

Extension announcement of the envelope opening of bid number 21/ 2008

The TV and Radio General Corporation announces the extension of the envelop opening date: bid number (21) for year 2008 for importing, supervising installment, testing, operating, licensing, delivery and guaranteeing power generating units with their peripheries for the TV broadcasting stations (Riyam – Hailan) until **Wednesday (29/10/2008) as the envelopes will be opened at 11:00 AM of the same date at the corporation premises.**



The TV and Radio General Corporation

Extension announcement of the envelope opening of bid number 22/ 2008

The TV and Radio General Corporation announces the extension of the envelop opening date: bid number (22) for year 2008 for purchasing, installing, testing, operating, licensing, delivery and guaranteeing visual surveillance cameras with their peripheries for the corporation until **Wednesday (29/10/2008) as the envelopes will be opened at 11:00 AM of the same date at the corporation premises.**

Broken equipments, complaining patients and angry staff

Al-Kuwait Hospital crying for rescue

By: Almigdad Mojalli

Yemenis in need of medical treatment have often chosen Al-Kuwait hospital in Sana'a over others for its modern equipment and good services, but during the past few years the hospital has witnessed a noticeable decline in terms of its services, treatment, diagnosis materials, maintenance of equipment, as well as wages and rights of its staff, especially foreigners.

Most striking to the visitor or patient of Al-Kuwait hospital as he or she enters its different wards are the dirtiness of the floors, the worn-out furniture and the bad smell in rooms and corridors. Many beds are broken, untidy and without sheets, and, in some rooms, the floor is littered with waste and old cans of food and drinks.

Many patients have complained of the unhygienic atmosphere in which they live in but they can do nothing.

According to employees in the hospital, most of the cleaners haven't attended work since the beginning of Eid holiday in protest at having their bonuses cut since June this year.

Patients complain of the very bad services they receive from doctors and nurses who are usually slow in responding to patients, especially in the case of emergencies, and explain that that some doctors give wrong diagnoses.

Ahmed Ali Al-Sharhani, 42, stated that he suffers from water retention in his stomach. After ten days of treatment for which he was asked to find over 1200 cc of blood by the doctors,



Only if you had somebody among the hospital's staff will you get the good treatment.

He pointed out that he had nobody to accompany him to his house in the district of Hashed 150 km outside Sana'a, and that he had borrowed money for transportation and treatment from neighbors in his village.

Ali Jaber, 58, suffers from kidney failure and has been in the hospital for about one month. Jaber complained that neither doctors nor nurses pay any attention to the patients.

"I have spent more than one month

personnel, many medical equipment, including the mammography machine which is used for the detection of breast cancer and echo-cardiography which is used to diagnose hearts, either don't work or need maintenance, which means that many patients everyday have to go without treatment, even though some may have come from far away to receive it.

A technician who preferred to stay anonymous stated that the materials required for x-ray and CT-scan had temporarily run out and that staff would have to wait at least two days for the new ones to continue work.

"The situation of the hospital is miserable. Many pieces of medical equipment are broken down and need maintenance, x-ray films run out from time to time and, whenever they do, we and patients have to wait many days for them. In the past, we used to replenish our stocks before they finished and all medical equipment worked well, but now every thing in the hospital is deteriorating," he said.

A doctor, who is working as a head of department and asked to be anonymous, noted that the main problem regarding medical services at the hospital is that the administration of the hospital doesn't respond quickly enough to the demands of its different departments, while patients can't wait long for the administration to react.

"The hospital's administration is careless and doesn't pay attention to the technical needs of the departments or the fate of the medical equipment that were bought at thousands of dollars. The ct-scan has been broken for six

months now and still hasn't been fixed. The mammography machine used to treat breast cancer was fixed only a few weeks ago, after it had been broken for two months. Another machine, bought for thousands of dollars, is not being used because no room has been built for it," the doctor clarified.

In addition to the bad medical services and bad state of medical equipment,

Yemeni and foreign employees are exposed to financial problems and extortion by the hospital's administration under the pretext of financial deficits and needing to fix the water pump.

A doctor in the abdomen department who wished to remain anonymous stated that the

salaries of about one hundred employees were delayed in June 2008 and the bonus of approximately employees were cancelled under the pretext of repairing the hospital's water pump, which is, according to the doctor, the administration's responsibility.

A nurse in the medical operation rooms, who asked for anonymity, noted that the employees' bonuses had been cut since last June with the excuse of the hospital suffering from a financial deficit and of administration needing to repair the hospital's water pump.

"They claim that the hospital is suffering from financial deficits, but why were there no deficits during the days of previous administrations? Where are the patients' fees? Where are the funds provided by the ministries of Finance and Higher Education? Aren't all of these resources enough to fix the water pump?" he asked angrily. "We are now

threatened with possibly not receiving our salaries for December," he added.

A female employee in the hospital, who chose to remain anonymous, pointed out that the hospital had refused to spend part of its budget on the food that it usually offers its employees in Ramadan each year.

Foreign employees, particularly Indians, are exposed to bad treatment and extortion especially with the new administration of the hospital. An Indian technician who wished to remain anonymous explained that almost 100 Indian employees -especially those with valuable experience- had left the hospital because of the way they were treated by the new administration.

"The situation is very bad here. The work is bad due to the shortage of materials such as x-ray films and the constant breakdowns of the medical devices. Also, we have just taken our salaries after three months of living without salaries" he said.

An Indian nurse, who asked for anonymity, revealed the bad treatment of Indians at the hospital in detail. She mentioned that the administration had taken USD100 for their resident visa without a receipt in return, despite the fact that Indian employees used to

"We only receive YR 4 million per month for food and clothes from the Ministry of Finance, but it refuses to give us money for maintenance and bonuses saying that the patients fees, which amount to YR 25 million according to the ministry, should be enough to cover the rest including repairing water pump,"

and funds provided by the ministries of Higher Education and Finance weren't enough to cover the hospitals costs.

"We only receive YR 4 million per month for food and clothes from the Ministry of Finance, but it refuses to give us money for

maintenance and bonuses saying that the patients fees, which amount to YR 25 million according to the ministry, should be enough to cover the rest including repairing water pump," said Al-Qubati.

Al-Qubati added that the Sana'a University stopped paying medical insurance amounting to YR 25 million for the university's teaching and administration staff which had caused the hospital to suffer a financial deficit.

He explained that in the past employee bonuses were paid from the money received for Sana'a University's medical insurance and that the hospital was compelled to cut the bonuses when these funds were cancelled.

As for the Indian employees concerns, Al-Qubati admitted that their contracts stated that the hospital must provide them with three meals every day, but that this was not possible at the



One of the visitors fixes the IV outlet after the nurse refused to do it

they told him that there was nothing wrong with him and asked him to leave the hospital.

"As you see I have water retention in my stomach. I came to the hospital ten days ago to treat it. After the doctors asked me to provide 1200cc of blood for my treatment, the companions of patients in my room donated their blood. Today they told me that there is nothing wrong with me and have asked me to leave the hospital," Al-Shahrani said in a quiet and desperate voice. "They just want to take money from us," he concluded.

here and they have done nothing for me. The doctors only visit this room in the morning then disappear for the rest of the day. If we need an injection, we have to call the nurses three times and they always shout at us," Jaber noted with a tired and angry voice as his visitor fixed the IV drip on his wrist.

When asked about the reasons of their negligence towards the patients, doctors and nurses attributed poor services to the bad state of medical equipment and the shortage of diagnosis materials the x-rays films. According to the hospital's medical



There are at least six patients in a 4 x 4 meters room. Patients are lost among the untidy furniture.



Doctors asked a patient to leave the hospital before treating him despite the fact that his stomach was clearly swollen.

receive the resident visa for free under all previous administrations.

"I have been working in this hospital for twelve years and the resident visa used always to be for free, but now I'm obliged to pay USD 100 for it without receiving a receipt in return," she said.

According to this nurse, the hospital's Indian employees receive only YR 3,500 per month for food although the Indians in other Yemeni hospitals receive much more.

Moreover, food money is only allocated to those employees the hospital's staff accommodation, but not to those who choose to live outside.

The Indian employees used to get a free return ticket home every two years which the hospital used to pay Yemenia for directly, whereas Al-Kuwait's Indian employees now have to pay YR 24,000 to go home on their leave.

In addition, the nurses of Al-Kuwait hospital receive at most USD 280 a month while their colleagues in Al-Sabaeen or Al-Thawrah hospitals receive USD 500 a month.

Dr. Lawae Al-Qubati, deputy of Al-Kuwait hospital, denied that the hospital had cut the salary of any employee at the hospital, but admitted that the hospital had cancelled employee bonuses to repair the hospital's water pump, claiming that the patients' fees

moment because of the financial deficit.

He added that food money would be given to foreign employees living outside staff accommodation soon, and that the hospital's administration had

demanded the ministries of Finance and Civil Services to increase the salaries and food money of its employees.

Al-Qubati clarified that the hospital administration had not refused to spend part of its budget on special Ramadan food for its staff, but that it was a decision taken by the cabinet.

Commenting on the lack of x-rays films, Al-Qubati said that the hospital had announced a bid for providing them. One company had presented a proposal, but the hospital later found out that the composition of film it offered was not suitable for the hospital's machines. As a result, they have had to resort to buying x-rays films from elsewhere.

Manager of public relations in Al-Kuwait Hospital Wameed Al-Qubati noted that the hospital's administration hadn't given its Indian employees receipts for the USD 100 of the resident visa because they had not asked for it.

"I have been working in this hospital for twelve years and the resident visa used always to be for free, but now I'm obliged to pay USD 100 for it without receiving a receipt in return,"



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POWER PLANT OPERATOR (CPP) Position # 0838 & 0839/ 08-063, 08-064, 08-065 & 08-066
Location @ the CPF & BAK PF Rotation 28/28

Job Duties:

- a) The CPP Operator is responsible to carry out the tasks required for the day-to-day operations of the Central Power Plant (CPP). This is accomplished by the CPP Operator via:
 - i) monitoring and recording the operating parameters of CPP equipment by physical inspection and "walk arounds",
 - ii) identifying anomalies in the routine operation of the CPP equipment and informing the CPP Control Room,
 - iii) under the instruction of more senior staff, performing adjustments and fine tuning of CPP equipment to ensure optimum performance,
- b) Shares responsibility for the safety and security of the CPP operations staff. This is accomplished by the CPP Operator through specific duties, which include:
 - i) performing inspections of work areas on a daily basis and reporting any unsafe conditions to CPP Foreman,
 - ii) ensuring that he is knowledgeable and compliant with CNPY "Safe Driving Practice",
 - iii) participation in Safety Meetings, Safety Inspections, SWP audits, and the STOP Card program
 - iv) being familiar with "first line" CPP Emergency Response procedures, and is able to implement them
- c) Shares responsibility (with all other CPP staff) for implementing and supporting the Responsible Care program and its initiatives.
- d) Shares responsibility with other staff for implementing and supporting Process Safety Management (PSM) initiatives within the power plant.
- e) Shares responsibility (with all other CPP staff) for the environmental conditions of both the land leases and the equipment within the CPP.
- f) Responsible for documenting daily operating conditions in Log Records and Reports.

Minimum Requirements:

- a) High school diploma (preferred)
- b) Adequate skills in writing, communicating work procedures for the plant with minimal supervision.
- c) Adequate knowledge of English both written and oral.
- d) Complete the requirements pertaining to Production Department Skills

- ❖ To Apply for this Job please apply to: Recruiting_yemsana@nengeninc.com
- ❖ Applications **should be submitted NO later than November 7th, 2008**. Faxed applications will not be considered.
- ❖ Only **short listed candidates** will becontacted



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Field Plant Operator Position # 0840, 0841 & 0842/ 04-063, 07-034, 08-65 & 08-066
Location @ the CPF & BAK PF Rotation 28/28

Job Duties:

- Record operating conditions of equipment and systems such as pressures, flows, levels, temperatures, etc. Record details using standard check-lists, and immediately reports any deviations from normal operating parameters to supervisor.
- Monitors chemical injection rates for maintaining oil and water quality.
- Close or open valves as required and prepare equipment for commissioning or decommissioning.
- Periodic inspection of process plant and power plant. Check for mechanical defects, leaks or vibration noises on pumps, engines and piping, and rectify defect if possible. Report abnormalities to supervisor.
- Carry out fine tuning and adjustments to achieve optimum performance.
- Use test equipment to provide information on the levels of gas so that vessels and other equipment are safe for hot work, and/or entry and inspection.
- Carry out first line emergency response, including isolations, using fire extinguishers, running out fire hoses and getting situation under control pending arrival of emergency response team.
- Monitor and record the operating parameters of wellsite equipment.
- Maintain log sheets for wellsites and manifolds.
- Test fluid levels in wells.
- Obtain water cut samples and perform basic analysis.
- Collect live density samples. • Pig pipelines.
- Monitor chemical injection rates to ensure rates comply with requirements.
- Perform equipment adjustments to ensure optimum performance.
- Identify anomalies in the routine operation of the equipment and inform the supervisor.
- React to anomalies in equipment operation, when required.
- Shut down and prepare equipment for maintenance work at wellsites and manifolds.
- Prepare handover documents for service rig work and slickline.

Minimum Requirements:

- Adequate skills in writing, communicating and work procedures for the field with minimal supervision.
- Adequate knowledge of English both written and oral.
- High school diploma (preferred)
- Previous experience as an Operator in an applicable Oil Field Facility preferred.
- Good teamwork capabilities.

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Polygamy: The ‘Fruit-Vendor’s’ logic and the Islamic view – Part 3

Reflecting on an incident from her childhood, Hanan Al-Wadee, researcher with an M.A. in Human Rights, confronts polygamy from a religious point of view.

By: Hanan Al-Wadee
For the Yemen Times

The attempt of portraying and understanding Prophet Muhammad as sexually obsessed- God forbid- through the story of his marriage to Ayisha and Zainab Bint Jahsh, or his polygamous marriage in general without considering the details, reasons and the surrounding political, economic and social circumstances is the result of an ignorant perception of some people, or an intentional vicious attempt to distort Prophet Muhammad's image by others.

The one who seeks the truth will attain the perception of polygamy in its elevated image, as was provided by Islam. He will find out that the Prophet's marriages, which were almost confined to achieving mere legislative or social goals, illustrate in an unquestionable way that second marriage was not founded to serve men's sexual purposes. It is a heavy social burden that men are not obliged to undertake, and before undertaking it they should hesitate a thousand times, because it is not a source of delight and happiness, especially when a man knows the degree of psychological harm that will be done to his first wife regardless of what noble purpose justifies his second marriage, and how serious the punishment for not achieving equality between wives, which is a condition that God provided for the second marriage to be completed.

Although sex is the number one reason that justifies polygamy, the fruit-vendor logic provides other reasons, including that a man can marry without a reason and with neither the knowledge nor the consent of his first wife, as if the wife was a creature that did not deserve the minimum level of respect. By marrying someone else without reason, her partner, friend and the father of her children causes a rift and destruction to their relationship, which is described by God as a garment; the closest to our skins.

How will I discuss the "without a reason" reason? Some might say that nowhere in the religion does it oblige him to marry for a reason and notify his first wife. On the other hand, he did find prohibitions against oppressing her and

being unfair to her! The fruit-vendor logic goes further than this; he decided that her feelings of oppression and injustice are a test from God Almighty, and thus she will be rewarded for it. But while she is being tested and rewarded for being oppressed, he is happy and pleased eating bananas, apples and grapes. And what prevents the man from being tested rather than the women? A man is supposed to be patient, to fight a lust that all the women in the world could not suffice, and seek God's reward for that test.

The concept of test here is clearer, deeper and in tune with the general principles of Islam, which believe that human beings, men and women, were not created to be slaves of their lust. On the contrary, Islam emphasized the concept of controlling lust in all its aspects, and for human beings to use their minds to distinguish them from animals. Why doesn't our friend the fruit vendor think of being patient and eat the same fruit every day if he is so concerned with God's reward, rather than forcing that reward on women?

One of the other reasons that justify polygamy, which goes against logic and realistic practice, says that women are larger in number than men, which leads to the problem of spinsterhood in the world. According to this reasoning, that is why polygamy creates a state of balance in society and gives women their right to practice sex and have a family. We can hesitantly find for this reason or justification a place under the first model that was practiced by Prophet Muhammad which is the social solidarity model on the basis that its purpose is social not sexual.

But considering all the cases of polygamy that happen around us, we cannot find that this logic or reason exists. Polygamy, through examining reality, made society more unbalanced, because the first thing which men seek

to find in the second wife -even if he is over seventy- is a young woman who has not been married before and of course does not have orphan children, so he would regain his youth with her, like our guy, the fruit vendor. Or if he is young, he might marry another woman to make up for his first bad choice, or for other reasons that are beyond the scope of this article. The women that are chosen are not the women that lost their chance to get married, but women that still had more than twenty opportunities to find psychological and sexual stability.

The natural result of this type of polygamy is to contribute to the increase of spinsterhood rates, and the ones who need support, the widows, remain without a supporter. So, where do we find the achievement of balance in society? Certainly not through marrying the kind of women that men choose as their second wife.

And what to do in a society like Indian society, where the number of men exceeds the number of women? Would a woman marry more than one man to ensure the psychological and sexual stability for men? Because in a case like this there would be many single men who deserve to enjoy stability. I even read recently an article published on March 27th, 2008 on Alarabiya.net that discussed Al-Azhar's legitimization of specifying the gender of the fetus. And since this science became a reality, it does not take much to imagine what sex Muslims would pick for their babies. Based on this hypothesis, we will find after a short period that there is one female child for ten male children. What would be the solution then? Would it be that a woman marries four men to achieve the desired stability for society?

Even if we consider this as a hypothetical idea, it would still be better not to depend so much on that justification because it was proven wrong as mentioned earlier. The type of women men choose to be the second wife, and maybe third and fourth wife are not those that would balance society. In addition, if creating that



balance in society is this serious and important, why didn't God make polygamy primary? In other words, why did He make second marriage optional and not an obligation for men? And why did God connect polygamy with justice, a condition that is so hard to achieve that it is likely to restrict the issue of polygamy completely? And why does God's love and concern for his worshipers appear when He says in The Quran: "but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then (marry) only one" which is clear direct guidance and direction for men to remain with one wife because God knows the consequences of injustice and where it leads?

Amongst the reasons for practicing polygamy is that religious scholars believe that polygamy protects society from adultery. That takes us once again to the sexual reasons which we did not find among the reasons for Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) polygamous marriage. On the other hand, those reasons confirm the logic of our fruit vendor, who portrays men as sexual moving machines, or animals that can

not control their lust. The truth is that the Arab Muslim community and the most conservative countries and societies are full of brothels, and some of their attendees are married and secured sexually.

Some of those attendees have more than one wife, and others are single men who chose adultery over marriage, although they are capable of affording the costs of marriage. That is why we should face reality with more courage, and admit that single male Muslims choose adultery over marriage even though they can afford to have a legitimate relationship. Other Muslims commit adultery while they have two wives or more because their wrong social and religious upbringing made them sexually obsessed. This wrong upbringing did not refine their sexual motives, but rather promoted the conception that men's sexual desires exceed the women's, and that they are unable to control those desires.

The misconception is further promoted through the interpretation of polygamy as a divine solution to serves men's desires which are not sufficed by one woman. That upbringing makes many religious and respected families marry their daughters to men whom those families know have committed adultery before proposing to their daughters. There is a sort of complicity by which those families find an excuse for their sons-in-law, on the basis that they are men and their instincts are too strong to be controlled.

There are countless other ways to illustrate how such wrong upbringing is

the main reason for committing adultery and practicing polygamy. If a man had received the same sexual education that a woman had (which is the education of oppression, taboo and prohibition) since he was a kid, the outcomes would be completely different. That does not mean that I agree with the sexual upbringing of women, for it is another wrong education, but I want to emphasize through this the importance of what we receive and learn and how it seriously affects the way we live our lives when we grow up.

Muslim men are up brought in a culture that finds every solution, excuse and tolerance for them; while on the other hand, it is not lax with women, even in the most trivial matters. Accordingly, men grow up with an open sex education, knowing in advance that society and religion are on their side. This culture of double standards not only inherits sexually obsessed men, but it also enhances the sense of superiority with which men look at women as minor creatures who were created to serve men. This culture is what led to the logic of our fruit vendor, who could not see any value in women except a sexual value that God created to satisfy men's desires.

Hanan Yahya Alwadee has an MA in Human Rights from University of London. She is the winner of Al Sada prize for her novel "Ahzan elktroniah - Electronic Sadness", 2004. She could be reached at: hananalwadee@hotmail.com

In memory of a great Yemeni scholar: Ismail Al-Akwa'a

Review by: Ali Saeed

Yemeni scholar and historian Ismail Ibn Ali Al-Akwa'a died last week at the age of eighty eight. Al-Akwa'a comes from a family of scholars and judges such as Alshawkani who was a great Yemeni scholar in the thirteenth century Hijriah.

Al-Akwa'a was born and brought up in Dhamar city where he also married and had four children two sons and two daughters. All of his children are highly educated and his daughter Fatima became the first female doctor in Yemen in 1972.

At that time there were no schools like today children used to study in mosques and some religious schools, so he studied in these mosques in Dhamar city. His father was a judge, so he used to teach him. Al-Akwa'a used to attend his father lessons and meetings with scholars. Also there was a religious school in Dhamar; it was called Alshamsia school. He studied at that school holy qura'an and other religious science.

His patriotism and political involvement

He was interested in politics since he joined the free Yemenis movement (Yemeni movement against Imamates 'ruling in the north of Yemen before revolution). He was arrested by the Imam's order and sent to prison because of his activity with this movement; the first time was in 1944 by the Imam Yahya Hameed Al-Deen for two years and the second time was in 1948 after the revolution failure in 1948 by the Imam Ahmed bin Yahya. He stayed in jail for three years because he was with those who planned the revolution. After that he went to Aden for medical treatment. In Aden one of Imam Ahmed's men arranged the way for him to go to Eritrea to have a medical operation to remove kidney stones.

After he came back from Eritrea he preferred to stay in Aden a way from the Imam's influence. Then he resumed his political activities in Aden. The Yemeni Free Movement was based in Aden and it established the Yemeni Union for them to work against the Imamate rule from there. Al-Akwa'a joined them and he was teaching the free Yemenis children at the Union center. He also used to write some articles in the Island Girl newspaper under a fake name.

Some time later he travelled to



Yemeni scholar and historian Ismail Ibn Ali Al-Akwa'a.

Egypt to join his friend Mohammed Alzubiary who was also a freedom fighter and a revolutionist. He stayed in Egypt for three years and then traveled to Syria to supervise the Yemeni students whose education was funded by Syrian government.

Then he came back to Cairo and went to Mecca to do pilgrimage. In Mecca, he met his brother Mohammed who came to do hajj and brought Al-Akwa'a's wife and daughters with him. After hajj, he returned to Cairo

with his family and lived there until 1969.

Before returning to Yemen, Imam Ahmed passed Boor Saeed on his way from Italy and he met him there and the Imam asked him: Why did you run away? He replied: because I'm afraid of you. So the Imam appointed him as a secretary for the Yemeni delegation in Moscow.

His political activity in the republican period

After the revolution in 1962, Al-Akwa'a came to Sana'a to congratulate the revolutionists and hence was promoted from secretary to a delegated minister in Moscow. Then he left Moscow to work as a cultural advisor in Yemeni embassy in Cairo.

In 1964, he worked in the ministry of foreign affairs and was appointed as a 2nd deputy to the minister. After that he was appointed as a roaming ambassador.

In 1968 he was appointed as the minister of information in the cabinet of lieutenant general Hassan Al-Omari till the government resigned in 1969.

General Authority for antiquities and books houses

After a long life outside Yemen, Al-Akwa'a preferred to stay in Yemen and create something to preserve Yemeni knowledge and antiquities. So he founded the general authority for antiquities and book houses. He remained the president of this authority until 1990.

His works

Al-Akwa'a wrote many books especially in the field of Yemeni history and culture. In Yemeni culture, he wrote (Alamthal Alyemenia) Yemeni proverbs encyclopedia.

In the field of Yemeni history, he wrote (higr alelm and ma'agla Fi alyemen) the places of science in Yemen, collection of Yemeni towns and tribes, Yemeni dams, the ziadia (religious group of shaites) it's growing and ideologies, Nashwan Al-himiari (SoofiYemeni poet) and the ideological conflict in his age. The customs and traditions of Yemeni rulers in the Islamic age, the great scholars in Yemen, Al-rasulia government (government that ruled Taiz and part of Tehama between 1229and1454) Islamic schools in Yemen and (Makhaleef Al-Yemen) plains between two mountains (geographical book) Also he did a research about the following:

- 1- Turkish words in the Yemeni dialect.
- 2- Ancient Yemeni languages and how they are related to Arabic language.

Al-Akwa'a had many awards. In 2003, Islamic conference organization awarded him the prize of research center for history and Islamic culture in Istanbul.

In 2006, French Institute for antiquities and social science awarded him and publishing a book in the occasion of reaching the age of eighty five.

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By the children for the children

Active children, whether in the Children's Parliament, non governmental organizations or community associations, have made it a point to stand up for their rights, and convey the voices of disadvantaged children in Yemen through art, public sessions and advocacy events.

By: Alice Hackman

“In some Western countries touching a child is illegal; what about beating?” asked 11-year old Amatallah on Save the Children-Sweden's “World Action Day against Violence” at a Shawthab-Save the Children event last Monday, referring to fatal domestic violence against children.

Under a canvas tent decorated with drawings by members of the Yemeni Children's Parliament and before an audience of two dozen children and several representatives from local child protection organizations, the event's articulate young host called on the Yemeni government to put an end to the perpetual cycle of violence against children in her country.

Domestic abuse is but one facet of violence against children in Yemen. Early marriage, child smuggling, female genital mutilation and parent insensitivity to the danger of weapons are among the others violations of the right of Yemeni children to a good future, according to the Shawthab foundation for childhood protection.

“Violence against children hinders their proper development,” declared Amatallah who presented a documentary she had produced with her brother on the occasion.

Due to the scarcity of official studies on domestic violence against children in the country, it difficult to gage the number of Yemeni children who are abused at home by their parents or guardians, but experts say the phenomenon is serious.

“There is no national analysis on fatal domestic violence against children in Yemen,” said Lamia Al-Eryani, head of the Shawthab foundation, “but, this year, 28 children who suffered from violence at home voluntarily came to us for help.”

Yemeni youth exert pressure on the government

This year, it is Yemeni children who are exerting pressure on the government to revise Yemeni legislation and uphold their rights as stated in the United Nation's Charter on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The CRC, signed by Yemen in 1989, states in Article 19 that signatories should take “appropriate legislative [...] measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.”

Today Yemeni children are taking matters into their own hands. According to the Save the Children, 2,700 children gathered last Monday

morning, Oct. 20, in different centers in Lahj, Aden and Sana'a to demand the government and relevant stakeholders in Yemen put an immediate halt to violence against them.

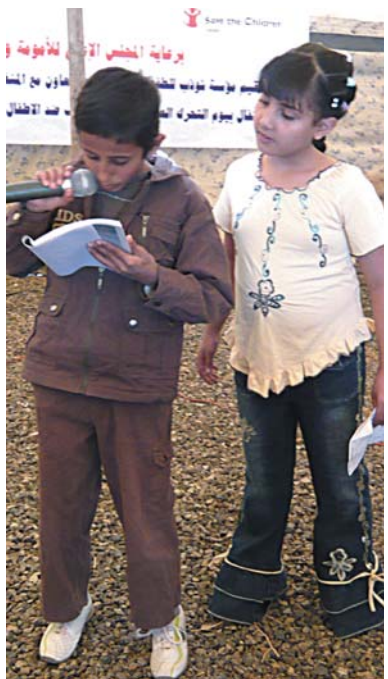
Correspondingly, the 46 young members of Yemen's Children's Parliament (CP) have been lobbying parliament for the last year to revise legislation on childhood protection in Yemen. In their last meetings with the adult parliament, they have pressured law-makers to raise the legal age for marriage, ban female genital mutilation and change the legal age where a criminal offender is an adult from 15 to 18 years old, according to adult coordinator for the CP Omkholtom Al-Shami who represented its members at Monday's event.

“We have [also] lobbied the parliament—especially the jurisprudence committee—to revise legislation on domestic violence,” she said. “We hope to see the end of fatal domestic violence in Yemen.”

“Members of the CP are currently appraising children's living conditions in hospitals, juvenile detention centers, care centers and orphanages in all governorates of Yemen [except for Sa'ada] in preparation for a shadow report on children's needs in Yemen to be presented to the United Nations in Geneva next year,” Al-Shami added.

Adel Dubwan, representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs, however highlighted the need to raise awareness of children's rights in Yemeni society while lobbying for new child-protecting legislation, explaining that new laws would be ineffective without familial support.

“We need to target those who are uneducated,” he said.



Amatallah looks on as Rushdi, ex-child laborer, demands government end violence against children



Children's Parliament member Ali Ahmad Al-Ashram addressed violence against children through art

Raising awareness of children's rights among children

In order to raise awareness among children in particular, Shawthab has produced a series of short cartoons with UNICEF to empower Yemeni children. Their latest production, Ahmad and the Three Tales, has been distributed to 5,000 schools in all the governorates in Yemen and the cartoon should appear soon on national television, according to Al-Eryani.

Rushdi, 13 years old, an ex-child laborer smuggled to Saudi Arabia but now living at the rehabilitation center in Asr, Sana'a, said of Shawthab-UNICEF production Ahmed Returns on child-laborers who cross illegally from Yemen to Saudi Arabia: “I think the cartoon is good because it will stop children from going to Saudi Arabia like me.”

Rushdi and all the other children who attended the event were handed a colorful pamphlet containing a summary of their rights as outlined by the CRC before they left.

The need for an effective system for reporting violence

Although Yemeni children are now more aware of their rights, an effective support network has not yet been set up in the country.

In his speech, Save the Children country director Andrew Moore called for an “effective system to allow children to report violence against them.”

Yemeni non-governmental organization Sisters Arab Forum (SAF) is making serious efforts to launch a telephone hotline for abused women and children to seek help from professional counselors.

Jamila Al-Masna'i, SAF representative, said: “We are looking for individuals with relevant backgrounds, such as studies in psychology, to be trained abroad to become our telephone operators,” adding, “For the time being, there is no such training available in Yemen.”

The SAF announced a four-year project last September for the better protection of Yemeni women and children exposed to violence and sexual abuse, and plans to have 20 lawyers to handle cases of violence of against women and children in the near future.



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