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Education key to maternal and newborn health

By: Salma Ismail

SANA'A Jan. 25 — Childbirth and pregnancy are generally considered times of great joy, but, for women in developing countries, these are times of deadly risk.

According to 'The State of the World's Children 2009' report, launched by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on January 15 in South Africa, women in the world's least developed countries are 300 times more likely to die in childbirth or from pregnancy-related complications than women in developed countries.

In Yemen, eight women die each day due to pregnancy or childbearing complications with only 24 percent of births taking place at hospitals or with skilled birth attendants.

The halfway point for meeting the UN's fourth and fifth Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - to globally reduce under-five child mortality by two thirds and reduce maternal mortality by three quarters between 1990 and 2015 - has come and gone, and the two goals are still far from having been met.

Although Yemen is not among the top ten countries with the highest lifetime risk of maternal death, the lifetime risk of maternal death in Yemen is 1:39, making it the highest in the Middle East.

The report states that the ten countries with the highest lifetime risk of maternal death are Niger, with a maternal mortality ratio of 1:7, Afghanistan, 1:8, Sierra Leone, 1:8, Chad, 1:11, Angola, 1:12, Liberia, 1:12, Somalia, 1:12, the Democratic Republic of Congo, 1:22, Guinea-Bissau, 1:13, and Mali, 1:15.

"Two thirds of all maternal deaths occur in just 10 countries: India and Nigeria together account for one third of maternal deaths worldwide," said UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman.

In the developing world, a woman has

a 1 in 76 lifetime risk of maternal death, compared with a probability of just 1 in 8000 for women in industrialized countries. The need for comprehensive action is paramount.

"Every year, more than half a million women die as a result of pregnancy or childbirth complications, including about 70,000 girls and young women aged 15 to 19," said Veneman.

The report also ranks Yemen number 48 in terms of its estimated under-five mortality for 2007. That's better off than countries like Sierra Leone, which ranks first, Afghanistan, second, Mali, sixth, Somalia, 19th, Ethiopia, 27th, and Pakistan, 43rd. The rate of survival for children less than five years of age is improving globally but the risks faced by infants in their first 28 days remain at unacceptably high levels in many countries.

The life expectancy in Yemen for 2007 is 62 years; in 1990 it was 54 years.

Developing health systems

The health and survival of mothers and their newborns are linked, and many of the interventions that save new mothers' lives also benefit their infants. The report highlights the link between maternal and neonatal survival, and the vulnerability of both mothers and infants in the days and weeks after birth, a critical time for life-saving interventions, such as post-natal visits, proper hygiene, and counseling about the danger signs of maternal and newborn health.

The report reiterates a widely-known truth, that there is nothing mystical about maternal and neo-natal mortality. The reasons why women and babies die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth are well understood. Addressing them requires good data and analysis, sound strategies, adequate resources, political commitment and collaborative partnerships. The weakness of health systems requires country-specific actions.

The opportunity to save the lives of thousands of women and children lies within reach. Research has shown that approximately 80 percent of maternal deaths could be averted if women had access to essential maternity and basic health-care services.

In Yemen, doctors and health centers are not equally distributed. There is only one doctor per 10,000 people as doctors tend to be concentrated only in main cities, namely Sana'a, Aden and Taiz. Health services reach only 60 percent of the country's 22 million people.

UNICEF coordinates with the Yemeni Social Affairs Ministry to carry out house care for the mother and the child. It has set out a project for providing clean health services in five governorates of Taiz, Lahj, Ibb, Hodeidah and Dhale' and will last till 2011.

The report also affirms that health services are most effective in an envi-

Millennium Development Goals on maternal and child health

Millennium Development Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	
Targets	Indicators
4.A: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	4.1 Under-five mortality rate 4.2 Infant mortality rate 4.3 Proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles
Millennium Development Goal 5: Improve maternal health*	
Targets	Indicators
5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	5.1 Maternal mortality ratio 5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel 5.3 Contraceptive prevalence rate 5.4 Adolescent birth rate
5.B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	5.5 Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits) 5.6 Unmet need for family planning

* The revised Millennium Development Goals framework agreed by the United Nations General Assembly at the 2005 World Summit, with the new official list of indicators effective as of 15 January 2008, has added a new target (5.B) and four new indicators for monitoring Millennium Development Goal 5.

ronment that is supportive of women's empowerment, protection and education.

Education is key

Women's empowerment begins with education. Research repeatedly proves that educated women are more likely to delay marriage and hence less likely to get pregnant while they are still children themselves.

Educated women are better equipped to earn income to support their families, more likely to invest in their children's nutrition and healthcare and more inclined to participate in civic life and to advocate for community development.

Educated women are more likely to seek proper health care for themselves, according to the 2007 Millennium Development Goals Report: "Eighty-four percent of women who have completed secondary or higher education are attended by skilled personnel during childbirth, more than twice the rate of mothers with no formal education."

"Saving the lives of mothers and their newborns requires more than just medical intervention," Veneman says. Stressing the importance of education she adds, "Educating girls is pivotal to improving maternal and neonatal health and also benefits families and societies."

Almost 53 percent of Yemen's children suffer from malnutrition and stunted growth. This affects children physically, but it also robs them of mental capacity, handicapping their future and the nation's potential. Children who are

malnourished can be brought back to health, but a mind that is unfed can starve for a lifetime.

Two thirds of women in Yemen are illiterate and UNICEF is working with the government to enroll girls into school to receive a full education. The report says that literacy rate for women aged 15-24 is at 67 percent.

Although much remains to be done, the training and recruitment of female teachers is bringing swift progression in some parts of Yemen.

Meeting Goals

The implementation of UNICEF's goals would undoubtedly reduce the death and suffering of mothers and children around the world. However, under conditions of growing global social inequality, the threat of worldwide recession, economic turmoil and an increased turn to militarism, whatever minimal pledges may have been made by the world's leading powers in the past to address the plight of those at the bottom of the development indices, they are likely to fall off the agenda in the coming period. Millennium Develop Goal 4 calls for a two-third reduction of the maternal mortality rate by 2015. In order to meet this target, the world will have to achieve a 70 percent reduction in maternal deaths between 2005 and 2015.

Following the global financial crisis, governments, NGOs and charitable organizations can be expected to cut expenses on social programs -not expand them- this year.



Eight Yemeni women die a day due to pregnancy or childbearing complications.

The failure to keep up the pace to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals on a host of social issues indicate that conditions for vast numbers of the world's women, children and men could decline in the coming years.

"As the 2015 deadline for Millennium Development Goals draws closer, the challenge for improving maternal and newborn health goes beyond meeting the goals; it lies in preventing needless tragedy," said Veneman.

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Jews doubt protection measures as they prepare to leave Yemen

By Mohamed Bin Sallam

SANA'A Jan. 25—A number of Yemeni Jews said that they are preparing to leave the country along with their families due to the fact that the government allegedly failed to protect them from extremists. These extremists are supported by influential figures in the Amran governorate.

"We were informed that President Ali Abdullah Saleh gave his directives to protect us and temporarily move us to safe places in Sana'a as well as give us lands there. The directives evaporated and we no longer hear anything about those promises," one of the Amran Jewish citizens told the Yemen Times.

"We are no longer safe in our houses or in the streets due to intimidations we are subjected to by some extremists who are protected by influential figures in the governorate," he added. He said that Jews in Amran are unable to go to the market to buy their commodities unless they are disguised. He pointed out that their jobs have stopped as they cannot perform any work due to threats against them. "What is worse is that we don't have any resources we can provide to our families," the Amran Jewish citizen stated. "We don't have social welfare that can provide us with the minimum standard of living. Our situation has been rendered absolutely disastrous."

Concerning the murder of the Jewish citizen Masha Ya'ish Al-Nihari, Khaled Al-Anisi, secretary general of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, also known as HOOD, which volunteered to defend the Jewish citizens in Yemen as a minority, told the Yemen Times that the Attorney General didn't accept the demand of HOOD to move the court



Amran popular market. Many Jews stopped their usual trade in the Amran popular market fearing they might be attacked or hurt by extremists especially in light of the Israeli aggressions on Gaza.

hearings from Amran to Sana'a under the pretext that such a procedure can be taken only by the Minister of Justice. Al-Anisi said that the Minister of Justice hasn't given them any response yet.

"Our demand is legal. We requested to change the place of court hearings to Sana'a as security authorities in Amran couldn't maintain security there and prevent threats of murder that relatives of the murderer cast against Al-Nihari's family," said Al-Anisi. "We want to tackle the situation of the Yemeni Jews on a national basis. This includes providing absolute justice that is guaranteed by Islam. This justice also preserves the safety and property of all Yemeni citizens, regardless of their religion or their beliefs."

Al-Anisi added that Yemeni Jews are afraid of the threats they receive from

extremists who are protected by sheiks. "A well-known man protected by Kahlan bin Mujahed Abu Shawareb intimidates Jews in Amran," he said. "He threatens them and he hasn't been arrested so far despite the President's directives to arrest all those who harm Yemeni Jews. There is something going on in secret which we don't understand in this respect!"

Observers concerned with affairs in Yemen said that "some influential individuals may be preparing to seize the property of the Yemeni Jews and expel them from the country, as they did with their ancestors in Yemen."

They said that threats and aggressions against the Jews during the last few years and murdering one of them as well as throwing grenades against their houses is proof that such acts are not random.

Doctor's murderer still at large despite nationwide protest

By: Enas Ahmed

SANA'A, Jan. 25 — Following the fatal assault on their colleague, medical practitioners are now on full strike in protest at the authorities' failure to bring the attacker to justice. Over 30 relatives of Dr. Derhim Al-Qadasi continue their sit-in which has lasted for almost a month now inside a tent erected outside the hospital at the Science and Technology University.

On Saturday, doctors, pharmacists, nurses and hospital workers of the Yemeni Physicians and Pharmacist Syndicate Union announced a full strike in solidarity with al-Qadasi event.

"We will only treat urgent cases and those which are already in the hospital. We will stand strong till the government fulfills our requests," Dr. Mohammed Al-Sermi head of the union said.

"Seventy hospitals have prevented their doctors from participating in the sit-in in Al-Sabaeen on January 22, by placing security at the gates to prevent them from going out," Al-Sermi added.

According to the communiqué released on January 7 by the Yemeni Physicians and Pharmacists Syndicate, all the hospitals should strike in solidarity with Dr. Derhim Al-Qadasi but, according to Dr. Al-Sermi, some foreign doctors in the Saudi German Hospital and Al-Mutawakel Hospital are not in strike.

"There is no need for us to ask anyone why they are not showing solidarity with the case," said Al-Sermi. "Those who think that it is only the murder of one person are mistaken: this is the murder of a whole community."

In the governorates of Hodeidah and Aden, hospitals started their strike on January 25.

"It's Dr. Al-Qadasi today and us tomorrow," said Ali Saleem, a nurse in the Al-Wahdah Clinic in Hodeidah. "If



Al-Qadasi's family continue their almost 30-day protest in a tent erected outside Science and Technology Hospital

we are not safe in the work place, then what about in the street?"

The governorates of Taiz and Dhamar started a full strike yesterday, according to Dr. Al-Sermi.

"We will start the strike gradually in Sana'a University," said Dr. Abdulmalik Ahmed, a professor in Sana'a University Faculty of Mass Communication. "We believe that we should defend our community's right to safety." Relatives hold sit-in on Science and Technology University grounds

Over 30 of Al-Qadasi's friends and relatives have been staging a sit-in in a tent inside the grounds of the Science and Technology Hospital since December 28 demanding the government find his attackers.

"Every day more people from our village in Taiz express their solidarity with us. The government told us that they caught some of the perpetrators but they didn't give us any details," Ahmed Al-Morshidi al-Qadasi's cousin said.

Ebrahim Al-Kaladi al-Qadasi, neigh-

bor and a teacher in the American Institute, said that he has been sitting in the tent since the second day of the attack. "I will not leave until justice is served," he said.

"The hospital's doctors are cooperating with us but the administration of the hospital isn't doing what it needs to do, although what happened threatens both the security of the hospital and the safety of the whole community," says Fawzi Galib, another relative.

"What happened is proof of the government's absence," Abduljabar Jonaid, a family member said.

"We are asking all security bodies, especially the Minister of Interior, to take it seriously and not to cover up the case or hide the killers, but take them to trial," said Dr. Abdulbasit Darweesh doctor in the Science and Technology Hospital. "Otherwise it will cause divisions inside the government. We are also asking President Ali Abdullah Saleh to look into the case because it is not only our case; it is the case of the whole of Yemen."

Houthis release military prisoners amidst ongoing clashes in the north

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Jan. 25 — Houthis released 30 prisoners they had detained from the military and security forces last Saturday according to a press release issued by the office of Abdul Malek Al-Houthi. The prisoners were handed them over to the mediation committee.

The information, published by the Houthi online website "almenber.net," said that the release of the 30 prisoners "comes to put forward a step to activate peace and prove good intentions." The release expressed the Houthis' hope that the government will release their own detainees from the Sa'ada war and to "tackle situations to serve the interests of the country and people."

Tribal sources in Sa'ada said that releasing those prisoners "came after appeals from their families which the mediators reported to Abdul Malek Al-Houthi, in addition to humanitarian reasons. It also came after the government didn't pay any attention to the military prisoners and refused to exchange them with Houthis detained by the government." In a related context, the Governorates of Sa'ada, Al-Jawf, and Dhamar live in a perpetual state of social and security related tension due to revenge incidents, political assassinations, and arrests of people suspected to be affiliated with the Houthis.

In Al-Jawf, assassinations and revenge acts escalated between those believed to be affiliated with the Houthis and other groups loyal to the government, including clashes between tribal sheiks and military officers. These acts resulted in over 24 killed and another 30 injured, as well as a number of youth rendered homeless due to fear of revenge since the fifth Sa'ada war was declared over.

Khaled Al-Sharif, director of the Supreme Committee for Election and Referendum (SCER), who is also one of the influential figures in Al-Jawf, denied any relation on his part with assassination of Dr. Al-Hamass, one of the Houthi supporters.

While sources belonging to the Houthis accused Al-Sharif militias of assassinating Dr. Al-Hamass, Al-Sharif said there is instability in Al-Jawf and

that there are a lot of clashes between pro-government tribes and others tribes loyal to Houthis. He pointed out that various powers, parties, and sheiks aim to explode the situations in Al-Jawf.

In Sa'ada, reports say that acts of murder and roadblocks erected in order to rob the population occur at various intervals in the area. In addition, there are still some continuing clashes between the army and the Houthis. The last of these clashes took place two weeks ago in the Bani Mu'ad area, when a Houthi was killed and three soldiers were injured.

In a related context, the Anis area in the Dhamar Governorate is still experiencing tensions after the government prevented a number of tribes from celebrating the Al-Ghadeer ceremony on the 18th of Dhul Hijja. Sheikh Ghaleb Al-Salami called on all human rights organizations to lift the siege imposed on his village in Anis by armed groups led by army officers. Al-Salami complained that some of his companions were injured when they were attacked by armed groups on the day of Al-Ghadeer. He added that the attackers killed Al-Marwani, one of his companions, after they arrested him in an injured state.

Last Wednesday, dozens of Al-Bukhaiti and Al-Hada tribes staged a sit-in in front of the Dhamar governor's office. The sit-in was attended by a number of tribal sheiks who demanded the release of six of their sons who had been detained by the government over holding an Al-Ghadeer ceremony. They confirmed that the six people were arrested without any provocation except for the suspicion of affiliation with Houthis. They further demanded that the government release 23 others detained in Dhamar prisons over different time periods but for the same suspicions.

Several powers aim to create clashes and wars inside Sa'ada, Al-Jawf, Dhamar, and Amran Governorates using the war against the Houthis as the backdrop and under the pretext of preventing the Houthi forces gain strength in their areas. Five people were killed and another 10 injured after fierce confrontations in Al-Sawad region, south of Amran, two days ago. The number of people killed since these confrontations

broke out last October between the Subarah tribe in Harf Sufian district and the Dhu Mohammed tribe in Al-Esha district mounted to 55. Tribal sources said that "confrontations have grown fiercer late last week after heavy rains fell in the area and water currents flowed to Wadi Mur, which separates most sites belonging to the two fighting sides."

The sources said that during these confrontations, light and heavy weapons were used by the two sides, including machine guns and artillery. They further confirmed that prisoners from the two sides were seized during the clashes and that many dead bodies haven't been buried yet as confrontations prevented citizens to reach locations where the corpses are scattered.

Several mediations have failed to stop war or reach an agreement between the two warring sides. The war began over agricultural lands, which every side claims as their property.

At the same time, two people were killed last Thursday after an exchange of fire took place between robbers in the Harf Sufian district and citizens from the Barat region in Al-Jawf.

Local sources said that the incident took place at a Barat crossroads, where a paved road connects Harf Sufian to the north with Barat. They pointed out that robbers from the Bin Hirshan tribe of Harf Sufian stopped a car carrying members of the Dhu Mohammed tribe before they exchanged fire.

Since the fifth war in Sa'ada stopped, the Amran Governorate has witnessed many incidents of tribal robbery along the paved road that connects Amran city with districts of Khamir Houth, Sufian, and Sa'ada, as well as the "Houth-Al-Esha-Al-Qafila-Mefkhadh-Hajour-Haradh" road.

Passengers who went through these areas said that hundreds of cars are seized at such tribal checkpoints. Meanwhile, security apparatuses in Amran don't play any role to stop such acts. This resulted in impeding travel many times, particularly given that car drivers refrain from travelling in these areas lest their cars be subjected to thievery. They said that the seizure of cars is based on the tribal affiliation of drivers.

US 45 million dollar iron factory in Hodeidah

By: Mahmoud Assamie

HODEIDAH, Jan. 25 — The Chinese-Yemeni Steel Company 'Star' for manufacturing iron began construction on an iron factory in the Hodeidah Industrial Zone (HIZ). The total cost of the project is \$45 million.

The project is constructed on an area of 194,000 square meters in the HIZ.

"The project is composed of three phases," said General Director of the HIZ Abdullah Al-Bukari. "During the first phase, the company started building concrete bases for the new factory as well as for its residential compound last November. It will be opened officially next May."

Yang Shomen, General Manager of the project, said "The first phase of the project costs \$15 million. This phase will provide job opportunities to 200 Yemenis besides 100 Chinese engineers. The daily production in this phase is 200 tons of iron a day."

He indicated that the second phase would be finished in 2010 and the third phase in 2011, clarifying the Chinese part of the project has 80 percent of the shares while the Yemeni part has only 20 percent. However, he asserted the high value of the factory for Yemenis

and Chinese alike. "We have visited other iron factories in the country but our factory will be the greatest one in the country. Its daily production output will be 500 tons," said Shomen.

For the production of iron, the project will depend on imported raw materials and on fusing collected metal scraps from scrap merchants, stated Al-Bukari.

The project, in its three phases, will provide 1500 work opportunities to Yemeni labors. Its annual production will eventually be increased to YR 400,000 thousand, or \$2 million. It will help Yemen's development and will invigorate the national economy with foreign currency.

Concerning electricity, the project manager said they could not access the public electricity supply. As a result, the company bought 26 generators with a power output of 13 megawatts.

Regarding this issue, Al-Bukari said that since Yemen already suffers from energy shortages, operating such great factories will increase the problem of electricity blackouts. However, when the new electric gas stations in Mareb and Dhamar begin operations, these factories will benefit from public electricity.

Pertaining to environmental measures, Al-Bukari said the General Authority for Protecting the Environment has conducted a study for getting rid of waste generated by such factories.

"Environmental measures are necessary; the company has considered this issue and has agreed with the Environment Authority on every environmental issue concerning the factory," stated Al-Bukari.

He continued to say that the HIZ zone provides tempting offers to investors, such as free land as well as customs and tax exemptions, in order to encourage companies to invest in the zone.

The factory is the third one in the country besides the iron factories in Lahj and Aden.

The Hodeidah Industrial Zone was established five years ago upon the cabinet's decision within the government's plan to establish industrial zones across the country in order to encourage investment. So far, the zone has granted licenses for constructing three factories that will produce iron and sugar. It also granted a license for an industrial compound for manufacturing fiberglass and small boats.

520 school teachers fired for absence

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, Jan. 25 — Up to 350 more teachers in the Amran governorate have been fired due to their unexplained long absence from work causing the breakdown of the educational process in many schools in the governorate.

With this dismissal, a total of 520 teachers have been fired from Amran state schools, leaving many teaching positions to be filled.

According to reports released last Thursday, the decision came in a meeting that was held last Wednesday between Kahlan Abu Shawareb, governor of Amran, and the Education Offices of the governorate.

The Supreme Council for Education Planning (SCEP) headed by Prime Minister Ali Mujawwar on Wednesday in Sana'a discussed the reality of public education, teachers and administration staff in the public schools, and the cur-

rent obstacles to education in the country. The meeting also addressed the school administration's responsibility. In some cases of teachers repeatedly not turning up for work, the schools give the absent teachers their salaries anyway or even take the money for themselves.

Participants stressed the necessity of procedures to discover such illegal payments and bring them to justice.

The SCEP directed the Ministry of Education to intensify unannounced inspection campaigns in schools to promote better educational performance. Coordination between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance is the best means to reveal illegal payments, said the planning council. Unexpected inspections should be carried out to make sure that only teachers that attend their classes personally receive their salaries.

The SCEP called on the ministry make sure that teachers distributed to

certain schools in governorates fulfill their duties there and not transfer to other governorates or even to other schools within that governorate.

Inhabitants in some districts of Amran last month complained that the absence of teachers in schools was hindering education, particularly in the rural areas.

Students from different districts in Amran last month informed the Yemen Times that the absence and irregular attendance of teachers had prompted them to drop out of school altogether.

The Amran Education Office fired up to 170 teachers who neglected their teaching jobs in December. At the time, Amin Al-Qudaifi, head of the office, had threatened to fire others if they continued being absent.

The governor of Amran approved the distribution of 1,800 teachers to the governorate's schools on Wednesday as part of the governorate's education plan for 2009.

In Brief

ADEN
**EC delegation visits Aden super-
vision committee**

Chairman of the Supervision Committee for Revising and Amending Voters' Lists in Aden Abdullah al-Nihari received on Saturday a delegation from the European Commission headed by Patrick Depont.

During the meeting, the delegation was acquainted with the process of the current preparation to hold the upcoming parliamentary elections which is set to be held in April, 2009.

The delegation also was acquainted with statistics registered during the voters registration in the governorate of Aden which reached 20 thousand voters.

The EC delegation valued efforts exerted by the people responsible in the committee.

SANA'A

Mish'al due in Yemen soon

A delegation of the Palestinian Islamic resistance movement Hamas presided by the head of the Political Bureau Khalid Mish'al is to arrive in Yemen in the coming few days.

Well-informed sources told the state-run of 26sep.net on Friday that Hamas delegation is to hold talks with some senior officials in the government on the new initiative Yemen offered to the leaderships of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Hamas to heal the Palestinian rift.

Yemen has presented in time of holding the recent Kuwait summit a

new initiative to resolve the Palestinian dispute to the leaderships of Fatah and Hamas movements as well as to the leaders of Egypt, Syria and Turkey.

The initiative aims to resume dialogue between the two movements and centers on the formation of a Palestinian government of national unity that will take office for six months to organize parliamentary and presidential elections.

It calls to reconstruct the Palestinian security bodies and to maintain security and stability of the Palestinian society.

According to the initiative, Egypt, Syria and Turkey will sponsor the dialogue as these countries have good ties and influence on both movements.

**Security stops attempt to sell two
antiquity pieces in Sana'a**

Security sources in Sana'a said that security forces have captured two persons who have been involved in an attempt to sell two antiquity pieces. One of these pieces called "Dallah" and the other is a unique one.

Website of Interior Ministry reported that the two persons admitted that they have received the pieces from four persons who they requested to sell them.

Worth mentioning, Yemen is suffering from this dangerous phenomenon which has a negative impact on the country's economy.

**UK to sign agreement to enhance
investment in Yemen**

Britain will sign a support agreement for enhancing the investment

and business environment in Yemen, UK International Development Minister Mike Foster said on Saturday.

During his meeting with the Prime Minister Ali Mujawar, the British official asserted his countries interest in developing its ties with Yemen.

Mujawar expressed the government's appreciation of increasing the British annual support to the development programs in Yemen.

He reviewed the development priorities and challenges in infrastructure area during the present time because of the global financial crisis and its effects on falling oil prices.

The premier highlighted the successes achieved by the government in improving investment environment, judgment independency, developing trade courts, strengthening anti-corruption efforts and reforming the governmental tenders' system.

The meeting also discussed the future cooperation trends in the political, economical and developmental areas.

It also dealt with UK technical support in enhancing investment environment in Yemen in addition to the bilateral security cooperation and the two countries' efforts in fighting on terrorism.

**55th conference of GCC health
ministers council**

Under sponsorship of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the 55th conference of the Gulf health ministers council will be held soon in Sana'a

The minister of public health and

population Abdul-Kareem Ras' stated to 26 September weekly that all health ministers of Gulf Cooperation Council and representatives of health international and Arab organizations would take part in the conference.

The minister said that Yemen would present a paper over basic health care and family health within the Yemeni strategy in this regard.

He added that the holding of the conference in Yemen reflects successes achieved by Yemen in field health and serious steps taken to join Yemen into the GCC bloc.

The minister said that the conference would enhance exchanging experiences between Yemen and the GCC countries in domain of the health care and different health activities.

HODEIDAH

**Three dams at \$630,000 in
Hodeidah to be implemented**

The Field Unit at Tehama Development Authority (TDA) started construction works in three dams in Siham and Jahif valleys in Hudeidah governorate at a total cost of \$630,000 in the current January.

The dams, which are financed by the Yemeni government and World Bank within the framework of Groundwater and Soil Conservation Project (GSCP), are a dam of 100m length with two feeding and filtering gates at a cost of \$350,000 in Sharifiah, the other one in Jahif at a cost of \$150,000 and the third Shalaeih's dam is at a cost of \$130,000 in Jahif.

These dams will help in expand-

ing the agricultural area in the two valleys, exploiting the rainwater properly and protecting the neighboring villages and different buildings from the heavy rains hazards.

DHAMAR

**Second antique season due next
February in Dhamar**

Dhamar Branch of the General Authority for Antiquities and Museums starts early next February the second antique season in Himmat Dhiab area and the third in Masna'at Mariah, Ans district.

General Director of Dhamar antiquities office Ali Assanabani made it clear to Saba that activities of the second and the third antiquities season, which would last for 45 days, include engineering study of two antique sites in these areas. The activities also include studying engineering details of antique and sites findings that are due to unearth important point of the area history.

He pointed out that the teams of antique survey have written down during the previous seasons 110 new antique sites in districts of al-Hada'a, Ans and Jahran dating back to different historical ages.

He indicated that the authority has approved YR eight millions for starting the process of equipping and furnishing the regional museum for antiques, manuscripts and folk heritage in Dhamar city in prelude for opening it officially.

He said that a number of the office's cadres will be trained in different antique fields and that the authority would send specialists to

Italy to be trained on maintaining antique pieces via modern ways.

MARIB

**Marib governor meets German
archeological mission**

Marib governor Naji al-Zayadi received on Saturday a German archeological mission headed by the Director of the German Institute for Antiquities in Sana'a over activities of the mission in the governorate.

The mission has started its works in restoring the al-Moqah Temple in the governorate, which would last until next March.

The governor praised efforts of the German institute in field of restoring historical sites in the governorate.

TAIZ

**UNICEF trains 46 health super-
visors in Taiz**

In collaboration with UNICEF, Education office in Taiz launched on Saturday a training course for 46 health supervisors in the child-friendly school which will last 6 days.

The training course aims to introduce the participants to the skills of the first aid and health education to create a healthy environment for children in schools.

In the opening, director general of Primary health care Abdul Baset al-Dubaa pointed out the importance of concentrating on the children's health, particularly in rural areas which need health education awareness.

Their News

**Growing Optimism That Obama
Will Improve US Relations:
Global Poll**

BBC- As Barack Obama prepares to be sworn in as the 44th president of the United States, a new 17-nation poll conducted for BBC World Service finds widespread and growing optimism that his presidency will lead to improved relations between the United States and the rest of the world.

The poll also shows people around the world are looking to President Obama to put highest priority on dealing with the current global financial crisis.

In 15 of the 17 countries polled, majorities think that the election of Barack Obama will lead to improved relations with the rest of the world. On average 67% express this upbeat view, while 19% think relations will stay the same and just 5% that relations will worsen.

This is up sharply - by 21 points among tracking countries - from polling done for BBC World Service six months ago, before Obama was elected. At that time just 47% expressed optimism that an Obama presidency would lead to improved relations with the rest of the world. The number of people giving no answer to the question is also down sharply.

This optimism does not necessarily mean, however, that views of the United States itself have changed. BBC World Service is currently completing its annual poll assessing views of major countries' influence in the world, which will be released within the next few weeks and will show whether views of US influence are improving.

Asked to rate six possible priorities for the Obama administration, the top priority in all countries polled was the global financial crisis. On average 72% said that it should be a top priority.

This was followed by withdrawing US troops from Iraq - with 50% saying this should be a top priority - then addressing climate change (46%), improving America's relationship with the respondent's country (46%), brokering peace between Israel and the Palestinians

(43%), and supporting the government of Afghanistan against the Taliban (29%).

Polling was completed prior to the current Gaza conflict in all countries except Egypt and India. In Egypt, 75% said brokering peace between Israel and the Palestinians should be a top priority.

The results are drawn from a survey of 17,356 adult citizens across 17 countries conducted for BBC World Service by the international polling firm GlobeScan together with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. GlobeScan coordinated fieldwork between 24 November 2008 and 5 January 2009.

"Familiarity with Obama seems to be breeding hope," commented Steven Kull, director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes. "But then again," he added, "he is starting from a low baseline, following eight years of an unpopular US president. Maintaining this enthusiasm will be a challenge given the complexities he now faces."

**Global Seminar on Journalism
and Democracy Open for
Applications**

Journalists from 22 countries worldwide are welcome to apply for an annual seminar on Journalism and Democracy organized by the Institute for Further Education of Journalists (Fojo) in Sweden. One seminar takes place in May/June and another one in September. Both will take place in Kalmar and Stockholm, Sweden.

This year Fojo Media Institute offers two seminars on Journalism and Democracy for journalists from selected countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. The seminars are free of charge, all costs covered, and will take place in Kalmar and Stockholm, Sweden.

Seminar one: 25 May to 12 June, 2009

Seminar two: 7 to 25 September, 2009

Closing date for application: 5 March, 2009

Invited countries are: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burma, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

The main objective of the programme is to scrutinize the role of the media in democratic processes and strengthen the position of free and independent journalism. The seminar will provide opportunities for the participants to reflect deeply on their current tasks and working conditions and to explore new perspectives, ideas and strategies for changing and developing their work at home.

The seminar will focus on:

- obstacles and opportunities for professional and independent journalism,
- news evaluation, working methods and ethics,
- newsroom organization and leadership,
- power and gender structures in the media.

The aim of the programme is to:

- open new perspectives on the media situation at home and in the world,
- create networks and partnerships for future co-operation and support among journalists from different social and political systems,
- find strategies for changing and developing journalistic methods.

**BBC Arabic extends its multi-
media operation with the launch
of 24/7 TV**

On Monday 19 January, the BBC will enhance its multimedia service in Arabic by extending the BBC Arabic television broadcasts to 24 hours a day and introducing five new television presenters from across the Arab world.

The launch of round-the-clock TV broadcasting means BBC Arabic becomes a truly 24/7 multimedia service bringing Arabic-speaking audiences, from across the world, news and analysis via radio, online, television and mobile.

Head of BBC Arabic, Hosam El Sokkari, says: "Our TV operation has gone from strength to strength since its launch as a 12-hours-a-day operation in March 2008, and our 24/7 television service will offer a non-stop news service for Arabic-speakers whenever, and wherever, they want it. We have reinforced our presenter team with five new talents who will, no doubt, enrich our programming with new dynamics and style."

The launch of the 24/7 TV operation builds on the success of the BBC Arabic multimedia news service.

The website, bbcarabic.com, continues to grow. A strong area of growth is delivered via its mobile WAP site. In the last three weeks it has received more than five times as much weekly traffic as during an average week in 2008. This follows new linking agreements with mobile phone operators in the region, including Vodafone Live in Egypt, Orange in Jordan and Zain in Bahrain. In another recent development, BBC Arabic is now offering One Minute video news bulletins in Saudi Arabia via operators, STC and Mobily.

BBC Arabic continues to expand its global distribution network beyond the North Africa and Middle East region. Following an agreement with International Media Distribution (IMD), a division of ART - Arab Radio and Television, BBC Arabic television is broadcast for one hour every day, at 21.00 GMT, in the USA on the ART America Channel on the EchoStar platform. ART America will also join BBC Arabic television from 16.00 GMT on 20 January for six hours of special coverage of the Inauguration of President Barack Obama.

As BBC's publicly funded international television service, BBC Arabic television is freely available to everyone with a satellite or cable connection in the region. It is distributed free to air by Arabsat, Eutelsat and Nilesat satellite systems. BBC Arabic television is also available on Channel 41 of the E Vision cable platform in the UAE and is streamed live via the website bbcarabic.com.



Announcement

Ministry of Industry & Trade, the general department of agencies and foreign companies branches announces for the general managers of working foreign companies branches in Yemen, which are not registered or have not renewed their licenses to present to the general department of agencies and foreign companies branches for registration or renewal of their licenses within 60 days from the date of this announcement in accordance to law No. (23) 1997.



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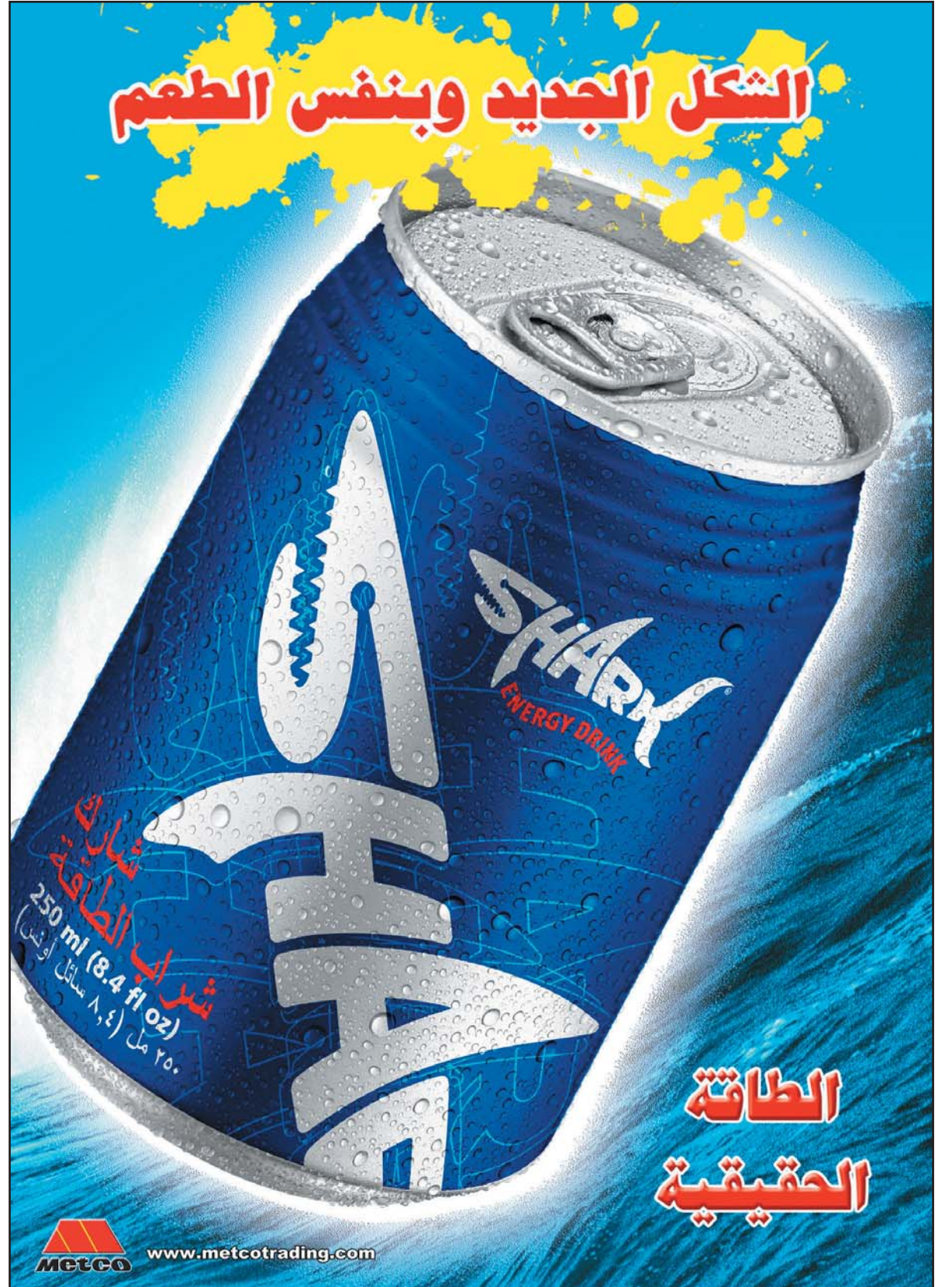
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Finally □ TOTAL's Female Team Inaugurates Block 10's Modern Airstrip



With smiles and prevailing relief, Total E&P Yemen has opened its modern airstrip in Block 10. The airstrip, whose construction took several months to be completed, has been engineered to receive medium-size aircraft, particularly Dash-8 planes.

The construction of this airstrip has come as a response to the steadily increasing activities and operations in Block 10. The airstrip will help facilitate direct, non-stop flights to Block 10 and therefore ease the objectives sought to be achieved at the operational level in the company's worksites.

Total E&P Yemen organized last Wednesday, 21 January 2009, its first flight for Sana'a female team to the new airstrip. The flight has particularly helped expose the female team of Total Sana'a Office to the major activities in Block 10. The team, which included 30 ladies from Sana'a Office, expressed their happiness to have a close look at Block 10 and to be privileged with the first flight to the new airstrip.

Mr. Martin Deffontaines, the General Manager of Total E&P Yemen, says that □the opening of this new airstrip is a milestone in the operations of Total E&P Yemen. This new airstrip is a key path to the realization of the company's plan to expand its activities and increase Block 10's production capacity.□



TOTAL

AED

Academy for Educational Development
Student Councils Project, Yemen

The Academy for Educational Development, an independent, nonprofit organization, is seeking candidates for MEPI Student Councils project, based in Sana'a, as follows:

2 Educational Trainers: 1 Female Trainer and 1 Male Trainer

Duties

Working under the direct supervision of the Project Director, trainers' duties will include

- Studying the current status of student councils in targeted schools in four governorates (Sana'a governorate, Amran, Mareb, Shabwah)
- Identifying needs of student and parent councils
- Designing guidelines for activities of student and parent councils in schools based on national regulations
- Designing training manuals for student and parent councils at the classroom and school levels
- Designing tools to assist schools in implementing student and parent councils
- Visiting project school on a regular basis
- Facilitating collaboration between school and community
- Supporting student and parent councils in the development of action plans

- Carrying out training duties
- Reporting regularly on the progress of the training activities
- Other responsibilities, as required

Essential skills

- Minimum BA in education or related field
- Five years experience in training
- Experience in writing educational training manuals (in the subject areas of community participation, mothers' and fathers' councils, and student councils in particular)
- Experience in designing evaluation tools
- Experience in the analysis of school-based data
- Readiness to work regularly in Amran, Mareb, Shabwa and Sana'a City
- Spoken and written English is highly required

Duration: Six months with possible renewal

Applications should be submitted to adeem@aed-scs.org.

Fax:01-309905 Applications submitted after 06/2/2009 will not be considered.



Nabil Al-Sufi to Yemen Times: "It costs less to dream than to despair."

A new political coalition is on the rise. The talk is that it represents a political alternative for Yemenis, especially in a time when existing political parties are busy minding their own interests. Although there are several Yemeni activists behind it, the face of this coalition is Nabil Al-Sufi, a prominent Yemeni journalist and activist, founder of News Yemen news website and Abwab magazine. Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Al-Sufi to talk about the initiative.



Nabil Al-Sufi

This coalition you represent, is it a political party?

So far it has not taken an official form. You can say it is a political initiative to create real discussion and to change the line of the political environment. With time, we will organize ourselves into a more formal structure that could be a political party or any other form. The name is not important because our mission could be done through individuals sharing a common goal. We are a group of activists who are concerned about our interests as citizens. None of the existing political parties talk about the people's needs. The parliament does not hold sessions on road safety, adequate education, or hospital care. What we see is a struggle between parties over influence and power.

We want to make politics the business of normal people.

For the past four years we as activists in human rights, development, democracy, and the press have been complaining about life and freedoms in Yemen. We grew tired of complaining, to the extent that our frustration left us numb in despair. We no longer hoped or worked for change. But a few months ago, a small group of this community decided to do something.

You see, it costs less to dream than to despair. So we launched this initiative. I was the risk taker and decided to face the media to test the reaction our call gets. Now after two weeks, we had more than 700 discussions, which is encouraging. So we hope within one week the group would step into the light and announce ourselves and our mission.

What is the mechanism by which you will change the political discussion of Yemen?

The first step we aspire to achieve is to win a few seats in the Parliament. This

is why we launched our initiative now. The coming parliamentary elections in April this year are an opportunity to put politics on the agenda of the laymen and laywomen of Yemen. Election time is a great opportunity to put life into the streets and discussions, and even to put Yemen in the news.

But mind you, we are not coming out as a new opposition party against the government, nor is our intention to help the government save face and give legitimacy to the coming elections in the case it had to enter it alone.

We will change the political line by representing the problems and issues of the normal people. I am talking about the bus driver, the mother in a rural area, the fisherman on the coast; these people are not included in any political party's agendas or discussions. If you ask a taxi driver whether he has read the latest political statement by a party or followed the latest session of the Parliament, he would defiantly say no, as they hold nothing for him. They do not touch his life or represent his concerns.

What we will do as individual activists in the campaigns and as Members of Parliament when we win is put these issues in the agenda and for discussion. If we do that, then we have achieved our goal.

You said "when we win", not "if we win". Does this mean you are sure about victory?

Nothing is guaranteed. And we are not competing with either the opposition or the state for its grassroots base. Which is, mind you, so small it does not even exceed ten percent of the total population. We want to target the remaining ninety percent who were not concerned by the political struggle or by the elections because it means nothing to them.

Our group is represented in six governorates: Sana'a, Aden, Taiz, Al-Dhale, Hadramout, and Ibb. The tentative proposal is that seven of us – four women and three men – would run for seats in the Parliament in those six governorates. It has yet to be approved; we

will discuss it this week, and we may run for more seats depending on the results of the discussions.

The group is made of people who are independent and who are affiliated to some political parties. But our affiliation to this mission is stronger than the political links, because by being part of this initiative we represent ourselves and our needs as citizens. This is stronger than any political affiliation because it touches our basic needs as humans.

We are not coming out as a new opposition party against the government, nor is our intention to help the government save face and give legitimacy to the coming elections.

You say all political parties are not real representatives of the people's interests. Are you?

Yes, because we do not claim to be anything more than citizens who have the ability to be outspoken and empowered. Also, we do not have a governing figure such as an official, a sheikh, or a businessman to become a reference point for our group. Women have a larger stake in our initiative than the men. It was like this from the start, as many of the people who nurtured the discussions and the birth of this initiative were

female activists from around the republic, so by default they are members of the founding group.

You see me as the face of the group for now, but soon there will be other names and other faces representing a wider group both geographically and demographically.

What is your plan for running? Where would you get the funding to campaign and reach out to your constituency?

We do not have any funding and that is a problem at the moment. The kind of support we need now is not only financial; we need training, we need open space, we need logistical help, and so on. But what we need the most now is acceptance of our right to be. We have seen several reactions from the officials and the opposition. We were welcomed more by the state because we demonstrate political variety and our existence simply means there is space for democracy in Yemen. And I must acknowledge that yes: in Yemen we still have this space despite all challenges. This is especially true when I compare our political environment to that of Saudi Arabia or even Egypt.

The opposition thinks we are there to endorse the state's position by entering the controversial elections. This is not true. In fact, we run for totally different reasons and represent a totally different group, one that is ignored in the political struggle for power between the parties.

Have you considered the local councils as a potential partner in this initiative?

Actually no. We have coordinated with individuals in the local councils. In fact we have partners in almost all the official and non-official bodies. But our partners represent themselves, not the organization they work for or their political affiliation. Don't forget that most if not all the local councils are dominated by the ruling party. We play a different tune, and so any kind of partnership has to come from the popular movement and then be organized as a political entity, not the other way round.

You call for change, but wasn't this also what the Joint Meeting Party was marketing in 2006?

During the 2006 presidential elections, Faisal bin Shamlan, the JMP candidate, was marketed as an alternative for president Saleh and not as a solution for Yemen's people. Not everyone could be convinced to vote for Bin Shamlan rather than Saleh, but everyone would support a bill that would mean no power cuts, better education, or free health care. This is the difference I am talking about. This is the change our initiative will bring to Yemen.

The JMP was fighting its own battle in the 2006 elections; we want to fight the battles of the people we represent, because they are our own battles. The problem with the opposition is that they lost track as they focused on how to harass the state rather than how to serve the people. The real competitor with the political parties should not have been each other, it should have been the challenges the people face. Their concern should not be how to make the other lose, but rather how to provide a system that fulfills the people's basic needs.

What kind of credibility do you fall back on to win voters' trust?

We have credibility simply by associating with the people, reaching out to them and being one of them. Our campaign will start from the bus and taxi cab stations. We will talk and walk with teachers, laborers, housewives; even girls in high schools will associate with us because we would give a voice to their dreams and concerns. When it comes to official representation we are most likely to run as independent candidates unless we are able to officially formulate ourselves in a political block or entity. But even if we could not do so before the elections, we will campaign for ourselves as bearers of change and messengers of the people. We do not need to have formal status, just like there is no such thing officially registered as the JMP. It is promoted as a coalition of opposition parties, but when they run, they register according to the different political parties included in the coalition.

Say you do win the seven seats, what next?

Next is to use our positions to bring the issues of the normal people to the discussion table in the Parliament. We will also advocate for this movement in all the public venues we can reach. We also

hope that the media would give us space through which we create a different line of political debate. Our campaigns will not end when winning the seats; being parliamentarians will be just the beginning. The moment the issues we talk about become the talk of the media, political parties, and sector ministries, then we know we have reached our goal.

The next step will be shaped by the results and the discussions the campaigns trigger.

What do you want now, and from whom?

First of all we need the various political players to acknowledge our right to formulate a political entity, which is a constitutional right for any Yemeni. We need them to think of us as an independent and equal political organization in principle.

We need the national and international

We need training, we need open space, we need logistical help and so on. But what we need the most now is acceptance of our right to be.

organizations working in supporting democracy to help us with training, capacity building, materials, or anything that would enable us in our campaigns. We want the individuals and intellectuals to believe that there is still hope and there is space for change in Yemen. We are not advocating for a revolution or overthrowing the ruling system as the opposition demands. We want to include the people's interest in both national and local agendas. So we are open to everyone and we represent everyone who wants to live a better life.

We want to make politics the business of the normal people. And so we want them to speak up and talk about their concerns and believe that they have the right to be treated better. We want them to hold the various instruments accountable as service providers for the people, not the other way round.

Finally, we want any kind of logistical, financial, material or even moral support that people have to offer us. We will accept any idea or suggestion that would help us develop our thoughts and reach our goals.

State's ambassador to Yemen claims that embargo on Cuba be lifted

Thirty-seven years have passed since Yemen and Cuba first established bilateral political, economic, technical and scientific relations. And such relations have become stronger over time, particularly in the areas of medical cooperation and education.

More than three thousand Yemeni medical scholars were taught by Cuban professors, either in Cuban or at Aden University while tens of thousands of Yemeni patients benefited from services offered by Cuban physicians, who really demonstrated distinctive humanitarian treatment at the various levels.

Seemingly, similar social styles and behaviors between Cubans and Yemenis helped bring peoples of both countries together. Social discriminations observed in capitalist states don't exist in Yemen. A Cuban citizen staying in Yemen feels as if he nearer to his own environment, and therefore behaves accordingly. Likewise, the nature of a Yemeni citizen is appreciated by the Cubans.

During a news conference at the Cuban Embassy in Sana'a, many journalists were attracted by statements and expressions made by chairman of the Arab-Cuban Friendship Association (ACFA) Mr. Lic Felix Gonzalez Hernandez about the distinctive friendship between Yemen and the Caribbean state that still sticks to socialism despite unfair embargo imposed by its neighbor the United States of America on it.

Speaking to journalists about why he is visiting Yemen, Mr. Hernandez said, "I visit Yemen every year. I tour several ministries, most notably both ministries of public health and youth & sport, as



Cuban Ambassador in Yemen H.E. Buenaventura Reyes Acosta and chairman of the Arab-Cuban Friendship Association (ACFA) Mr Lic Felix Gonzalez Hernandez

well as other governorates where I can meet Cuban teachers and physicians to see how they are doing."

He adds, "This time, I visited Ministry of Youth & Sports (MYS) to see how useful the service provided by Cuban sport physicians in Yemen is. I was stunned by how cordially those physicians are received in Yemeni stadiums. I appreciated the important role played by those physicians in treating injuries suffered by Yemeni players in games such as football, volleyball, basketball and track & field."

Speaking about the role played by ACFA in strengthening relations between both friendly states, he expressed that his consecutive visits helped him in identifying needs of Yemeni friends, particularly in medical and educational areas and



reporting them to Cuban officials, who then discussed matters of sending sport physicians to Yemen. He continued that three physicians were sent this time, which is the first for MYS to introduce such experts to its sporting clubs.

Joint Governmental Committee to meet in March

Asked who he met during his most recent visit, Hernandez replied, "I met many executive officials in Yemeni government and discussed with them how to maintain distinctive ties between both nations, plus the ongoing arrangements for a prospective meeting of the Joint Governmental Committee due to be held in March. We also discussed how to pave the way for signing several agreements on health, education and sport sectors that are

bound to be very functional in strengthening ties between Yemenis and Cubans."

Concluding his conversation at the news conference, ACFA Chairman expressed his happiness about visiting Yemen once again. He hoped that his next visit may help further promote medical cooperation between both countries.

On a side note, the Yemen Times met on Saturday new Cuban Ambassador to Yemen Mr. Younisa Pountwar Acosta, who said he is extremely happy to represent his state in Yemen, confirming that he will do his best to maintain distinctive relations between Yemen and Cuba in health, military, educational and sport areas.

The Cuban Envoy added that both Yemen and Cuba are currently working on finalizing arrangements for meeting of the Joint Governmental Committee, due to be held in March in his state's capital city of Havana.

The embargo had no effect on revolution

Regarding the 50th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, Acosta stated that Cubans marked at the beginning of this January the 50th Anniversary of the revolution, which is one of the most recent Marxist revolutions in the world. The event was marked in absence of the historical leader Fidel Castro due to his poor health. "Despite this, Cubans displayed archived scenes showing address by the revolution leader at Cesbides in the city of Santiago De Cuba where Castro, at age 32, declared the revolution", he continued.

According to Acosta, Cuban President

Raul Castro said the revolution did not fail despite economic difficulties as a result of the U.S. embargo on the nation.

He quoted the president as saying, "We must not think that everything will be easy since matters may get complicated. We defeated dictatorship and are happy for doing so. However, we shouldn't deceive ourselves by thinking that everything will be easy from now onward. Millions of Cuban male and female population turned out to be laborers, students or soldiers when necessary."

"Cost of liberty is high"

"We believe in the Martini Slogan 'cost of liberty is high' and we are required to accept living without liberty or be determined to buy it for its deserved price. Today, we are not the only people facing the American Empire, and revolution this time should be stronger than in the past. We are proud of the passage of half a century from our victories, and our attention must be drawn to the coming fifty years, bound to see permanent struggle," the Cuban President said as quoted by Acosta. "It is the duty of the historical leadership of the revolution to prepare new generations to bear the national responsibility in order for misery, poverty and injustice not to return to our homeland. Our people took a firm decision to undertake permanent struggle."

With regard to US embargo on Cuba, Acosta explained, "this embargo must be lifted. According to Geneva Treaty of 1948, the embargo on Cuba is labeled as a genocide crime. The embargo, is a legal violation of the UN Charter, hurts international trade and hinders navigation.

Those foreign investors and businessmen in Cuba suffer a lot because of the embargo."

He went on to say that the embargo violates human rights in both Cuba and the U.S., as well as other states with a desire to invest freely in Cuba. "We feel friendly toward the American people, who are not blamed for the embargo. We are victims of an unfair policy followed by the American government," the ambassador stated.

According to the Cuban diplomat, the embargo is the biggest obstacle facing economic and social development in Cuba. He mentioned that the embargo is the result of irrational policy that is not supported inside or outside the U.S., adding that the U.S. government should recognize that the embargo against Cuba is unjustified. "We the Cubans are not submissive. We are steadfast. We unified ourselves and created a new force to defend our sovereignty and rights," the Cuban Envoy expressed.

In February, 1962 the then American President John Kennedy levied an embargo against Cuba, which is still effective until now while the current President Barack Obama promised to alleviate the embargo. In 2008, the Caribbean state suffered three hurricanes, which, according to official estimates, left damage worth \$10 billion (equivalent to 20 percent of the state's gross domestic product). The disasters made the state unable to repay some of its debts. The 11.2 million-strong population island found new partners, most notably Venezuela that gives it 100 thousand barrels of oil per day, in addition to China.

Torching Pakistan's Schools

On December 25, 2008, the local Taliban leader banned girls from attending schools after January 15, and announced that violators would be punished. The Media Line spoke to Zia-ud-Din Yousafzai, a school teacher and president of the private schools association in the Swat Valley to find out how he is dealing with the situation.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child every child has the right to education. However, there are few places in the world where the distance between declaration and reality is as great as in the remote Swat Valley in the troubled northwestern tribal areas of Pakistan.

On December 25, 2008, the local Taliban leader banned girls from attending schools after January 15, and announced that violators would be punished.

The Media Line spoke to Zia-ud-Din Yousafzai, a school teacher and president of the private schools association in the Swat Valley to find out how he is dealing with the situation.

TML: How is the school system in Pakistan organized?

Yousafzai: We have two types of educational systems in Swat. One is the government system and the other is the



Fazlullah militants.

private system. In the government system there are more than 1,500 institutions for boys and girls, and more than 400 private institutions are functioning in the private sector both for boys and for girls.

TML: Are all schools just boys and girls or are there mixed ones?

Yousafzai: In the private school system, some 20 institutions have separate campuses for female

education in the higher-level secondary schools. In all 400 schools at the primary level up to grade four and five, boys and girls study together in the same institution, so you can say there is coeducation. But at the higher level, grade four and above, we have separate campuses for the girls.

TML: What is the attendance rate?

Yousafzai: The total population in the district is 1.7 million, and some 52,000

[children] go to school, of whom 25,000 are girls.

TML: There has recently been a wave of violence against schools in the Swat Valley. When did the violence start?

Yousafzai: The violence started two years ago when the militants became extreme and started heinous strikes against government property. Some 140 schools have been blown up so far. We thought that as the government targeted the houses of the militants during the security forces operation, the militants would target government properties. But later on they [the militants] also targeted some private schools and colleges. One missionary school that was established in 1955 before we merged with Pakistan [Swat was a separate state until 1969], was blown up and the Taliban spokesman said that it was a missionary school and Christianity was taught [there], but he was really telling a lie and there was nothing like that [happening]. Another institution called Excelsior College, where some 3,000 students were studying, was blown up with the excuse that it was coeducational. But this was not true. Later on they also targeted the private institutions. Last month, on December 25, [Taliban leader] Maulana Fazalullah announced on his radio program that female

students would not be allowed to go to any school after January 15.

The private school association... made an appeal through the newspaper to the heads of the Taliban asking them to review their decision. So in light of that appeal and also in light of the request of Mullah Umer, who is the head of the Tehrik-i-Taliban in Pakistan, they reviewed their decision, allowing girl students up to grade four but their decision regarding students from grade five and above is still intact. So, while we usually have winter vacation from January 1 to January 31, since the threats from Maulana Fazalullah we extended our school working days to January 14 to get maximum benefit from the deadline.

Now the government is trying to convince us that they will give us security and is requesting that we reopen our schools in February. But we are adopting a wait-and-see policy to see if peace is restored, and if the security situation is quite good then we will be able to reopen our girls schools from year five and above. However, if the situation prevails as it is today, we won't be able to reopen our schools even at the request of government officials.

TML: Has the government provided any police or military forces to

protect the schools?

Yousafzai: They are offering security only for the municipal Mengora area where there are only 70 schools, and only 10 schools where there are separate female colleges from grade five and above. But we have 400 schools [in total]. They are offering us security inside and outside the school campuses, but we are unable to accept that because peace should not be restored in part, it should be restored as a whole. After Fazalullah's announcement on December 25, half of the students were absent the following morning because they were scared and their parents did not allow them to go school.

So, in this present scenario, even if we [were to] open the schools and the government provided security, parents would not be able to send their children to school unless they heard on the radio [of Maulana Fazalullah] orders to reopen the schools. A second important thing is that if the Taliban are going to keep schools closed at gunpoint and the government is going to open it at gunpoint, this is quite a tense situation and we won't be able to operate or function.

It is also a matter of security as some children come to school from kilometers away. So, who will give them security on the way to school and home again? That is the question.

The Dark Side of Self-Determination

By: Joseph S. Nye

National self-determination seems a straightforward moral principle, but it is fraught with problems. After Russia sent troops into Georgia in August 2008, it recognized the independence of two breakaway Georgian provinces, South Ossetia and Abkhazia. When few other states followed its example, Russia pointed out that the NATO countries had used force to help Kosovo separate from Serbia.

Self-determination is generally defined as the right of a people to form its own state. This is an important principle, but who is the self that is to do the determining?

Consider Somalia back in the 1960's. Africans used the principle of self-determination to end colonial rule. Unlike many other African states, Somalis had roughly the same linguistic and ethnic background. In contrast, neighboring Kenya was formed by colonial rule from dozens

of different peoples or tribes, with different linguistic backgrounds and customs. Part of northern Kenya was inhabited by Somalis.

Somalia said the principle of national self-determination should allow Somalis in northeastern Kenya (and in the southern Ethiopia) to secede, because they were one Somali nation. Kenya and Ethiopia refused, saying they were still in the process of building a nation. The result was a series of wars in northeast Africa over the Somali nationalist question. The ironic sequel was Somalia's later fragmentation in a civil war among its clans and warlord leaders.

Voting does not always solve problems of self-determination. First, there is the question of where one votes. Consider Ireland, where for many years Catholics objected that if a vote were held within Northern Ireland, the two-thirds Protestant majority would rule. Protestants replied that if a vote were held within the geographical area of the entire island, the two-thirds Catholic majority would rule.

Eventually, after decades of strife,

outside mediation helped. But this still does not address the question of when one votes. In the 1960's, the Somalis wanted to vote right away; Kenya wanted to wait 40 or 50 years while it went about its nation-building, or reshaping tribal allegiances into a Kenyan identity.

Does secession harm those left behind? What about the resources the secessionists take with them, or the disruption they create in the country they leave?

For example, the victorious powers in World War I invoked the principle of self-determination, but after the dismantlement of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, the Sudetenland was incorporated into Czechoslovakia, even though its inhabitants spoke German. After the Munich Agreement in 1938, the Sudeten Germans seceded from Czechoslovakia and joined Germany, which meant that the mountainous frontier fell under German control – a terrible loss for Czech defenses.

Similarly, when eastern Nigeria decided it wanted to secede and form the state of Biafra in the 1960s, other

Nigerians resisted, in part because Biafra included most of Nigeria's oil. They argued that the oil belonged to all of Nigeria's people, not just the eastern area.

After 1989, the issue of self-determination became acute again in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In the Caucasus, Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Georgians, Abkhazians, and Chechens all demanded states on the basis of self-determination. In Yugoslavia, the Slovenes, Serbs, and Croats managed to carve out independent republics in the early 1990's, but the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina were less successful.

The war in Bosnia devastated the civilian population, and war-crimes tribunals were convened in The Hague, starting in 1996, to convict those responsible for the massacres. Part of what made the war in Bosnia so complicated for the international community was the problem of assessing how much of the fighting could be attributed to tensions among Bosnian Croats, Serbs, and Muslims, and how much of the violence was

caused by Serbia's intervention.

If this was not caused by simple aggression on the part of Serbia, then the only grounds for intervention would be to prevent a massacre. As with Rwanda in 1994, the international community was united in its condemnation of the Balkan violence, but was unable to agree on effective joint action until late in the conflict, in 1995, when a NATO peacekeeping force was sent to the troubled area.

Self-determination has turned out to be an ambiguous moral principle. Woodrow Wilson thought it would solve problems in central Europe in 1919, but it created as many as it solved. Adolf Hitler used the principle to undermine fragile states in the 1930's. Today, with less than 10% of the world's states being homogeneous, treating self-determination as a primary moral principle could have disastrous consequences in many regions.

The best hope for the future is to ask what is being determined as well as who determines it. In situations where groups have difficulties living

together, it may be possible to allow a degree of autonomy in the determination of internal affairs. Internal self-determination could allow degrees of cultural, economic, and political autonomy similar to that which exists in countries like Switzerland or Belgium.

Where such loosening of the bonds is still not enough, it may be possible in some cases to arrange an amicable divorce, as happened when Czechoslovakia peacefully divided into two sovereign countries in 1993. But absolute demands for self-determination are likely to become a source of endless violence unless handled carefully.

Demands for self-determination in today's world must be judged on a case-by-case basis that assesses the motives, means, and consequences involved, and that does so in a multilateral framework.

Joseph S. Nye, Jr. is a professor at Harvard and author of *The Powers to Lead*.

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UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
INTERNAL & EXTERNALLY VACANCY NOTICE**

Title of Post: **Snr. Programme Clerk**
Position Number: **10012959**
Category & Level: **GL 5**
Location: **Aden**

Date of Entry on Duty: **Immediately**
Duration: **31 Dec. 2009**
Closing Date: **31 Jan. 2009**

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Under the direct supervision of the Programme Officer, in the Sub-Office Aden, the incumbent is expected to perform the following duties, guided by the humanitarian principles and values of the United Nations, and adhering to the UN Code of Conduct:

- ✦ Collects, registers and maintains information on Project activities by reviewing reports and through first-hand sources;
- ✦ Prepares status and progress reports, prepares tables and drafts corresponding text, prepares background material for use in discussions and briefing sessions;
- ✦ Participates in the preparation of draft project documents including sub-agreements, project submissions, revisions and prepares project activities in MSRP, and translates project documents as required;
- ✦ Monitors project/programme activities by reviewing and analyzing a variety of records and reports, especially budgets and financial implementation. Maintains close contact with governmental and non-governmental implementing partners, providing co-operation and guidance as necessary;
- ✦ Performs specific administrative operational/control tasks for project/programme activities. This may include field visits for specific monitoring and evaluation issues;
- ✦ Undertakes appropriate actions in absence of supervisor in order to avoid delays in project/programme execution;
- ✦ Performs other duties as required.

Qualification Requirements
Knowledge and Skills: Secondary Education, training/courses on program related activities would be an asset.
Experience: Five years of progressively responsible field based work, of which at least one year was closely to Programme-related activities. Should also have excellent communication skills
Languages: Fluent in Arabic with very good knowledge of English (particularly writing skills).

FOR INTERNAL CANDIDATES:
Priority consideration will be given to staff members whose grades are equal or below that of the post advertised. Only candidates who have served one year in their present post will be eligible for consideration as internal candidates in connection with the vacancy. Candidates who do not meet the criteria as internal candidates can be considered as external candidates.

FOR EXTERNAL CANDIDATES
If no internal candidate is qualified, external candidate will be considered.

GENDER BALANCE POLICY:
Applications from equally qualified female candidates will be given priority consideration.
If you wish to be considered for this vacancy, please submit your application and UN P11 form or a well elaborated C.V.

IMPORTANT:
✦ APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE ABOVE MENTIONED CLOSING DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATION SECTION OF UNHCR. Tel No.: 23511/231441 Fax No.: 02-234406
✦ APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN SEALED ENVELOP TO:
Ms. Diana A. Sallam, HR UNHCR Sub. Office Aden
UNHCR SUB-OFFICE ADEN
P.O. Box: 6090,
Aden- Republic of Yemen Or by Fax # 02-234406

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
INTERNAL & EXTERNAL VACANCY NOTICE**

Title of Post: **Driver**
Position Number: **10012963**
Category & Level: **GL 2**
Location: **Mayfa'a**

Date of Entry on Duty: **Immediately**
Duration: **31 Dec. 2009**
Closing Date: **31 Jan. 2009**

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Under the direct supervision of the Associate Field Officer Mayfa'a Reception Centre, the incumbent is expected to perform the following duties, guided by the humanitarian principles and values of the United Nations, and adhering to the UN Code of Conduct:

- ✦ Drives office vehicles for the transport of authorized personnel and delivery and collection of mail, documents and other items.
- ✦ Makes own assessment of the threats to security in given circumstances, and takes action to reduce risks wherever possible.
- ✦ Has a detailed knowledge of standard UN/UNHCR security procedures, and applies these meticulously when conditions require them.
- ✦ Facilitates formalities with local authorities as required.
- ✦ Responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the assigned vehicle, checks oil, water, battery, brakes, tires, etc., performs minor repairs and arranges for other repairs and ensures that the vehicle is kept clean.
- ✦ Logs official trips, daily mileage, gas consumption, oil changes greasing, etc.
- ✦ Ensures that the steps required by rules and regulations are taken in case of involvement in accident.
- ✦ Performs other duties as required.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
Knowledge and Skills: Primary Education, possess a valid Driving licence and have knowledge of driving rules and regulations and be able to undertake minor vehicle repair.
Experience: Two years of previous job experience
Languages: Good knowledge of local language and knowledge of the working language of the duty station (English)

FOR INTERNAL CANDIDATES:
Priority consideration will be given to staff members whose grades are equal or below that of the post advertised. Only candidates who have served one year in their present post will be eligible for consideration as internal candidates in connection with the vacancy. Candidates who do not meet the criteria as internal candidates can be considered as external candidates.

FOR EXTERNAL CANDIDATES
If no internal candidate is qualified, external candidate will be considered.

GENDER BALANCE POLICY:
If you wish to be considered for this vacancy, please submit your application and UN P11 form or a well elaborated C.V.

IMPORTANT:
✦ APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE ABOVE MENTIONED CLOSING DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATION SECTION OF UNHCR. Tel No.: 23511/231441
✦ APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN SEALED ENVELOP TO:
Ms. Diana A. Sallam, HR UNHCR Sub. Office Aden
UNHCR SUB-OFFICE ADEN
P.O. Box: 6090,
Aden- Republic of Yemen Or by Fax # 02-234406

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
INTERNAL & EXTERNAL VACANCY NOTICE**

Title of Post: **Driver**
Position Number: **10008215**
Category & Level: **GL 2**
Location: **Aden**

Date of Entry on Duty: **Immediately**
Duration: **31 Dec. 2009**
Closing Date: **31 Jan. 2009**

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Under the direct supervision of the Admin. Clerk Aden/Field Officer Ahwar Reception Centre, the incumbent is expected to perform the following duties, guided by the humanitarian principles and values of the United Nations, and adhering to the UN Code of Conduct:

- ✦ Drives office vehicles for the transport of authorized personnel and delivery and collection of mail, documents and other items.
- ✦ Makes own assessment of the threats to security in given circumstances, and takes action to reduce risks wherever possible.
- ✦ Has a detailed knowledge of standard UN/UNHCR security procedures, and applies these meticulously when conditions require them.
- ✦ Facilitates formalities with local authorities as required.
- ✦ Responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the assigned vehicle, checks oil, water, battery, brakes, tires, etc., performs minor repairs and arranges for other repairs and ensures that the vehicle is kept clean.
- ✦ Logs official trips, daily mileage, gas consumption, oil changes greasing, etc.
- ✦ Ensures that the steps required by rules and regulations are taken in case of involvement in accident.
- ✦ Undertakes regular missions to Ahwar and other field locations.
- ✦ Performs other duties as required.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
Knowledge and Skills: Primary Education, possess a valid Driving licence and have knowledge of driving rules and regulations and be able to undertake minor vehicle repair.
Experience: Two years of previous job experience
Languages: Good knowledge of local language and knowledge of the working language of the duty station (English)

FOR INTERNAL CANDIDATES:
Priority consideration will be given to staff members whose grades are equal or below that of the post advertised. Only candidates who have served one year in their present post will be eligible for consideration as internal candidates in connection with the vacancy. Candidates who do not meet the criteria as internal candidates can be considered as external candidates.

FOR EXTERNAL CANDIDATES
If no internal candidate is qualified, external candidate will be considered.

GENDER BALANCE POLICY:
If you wish to be considered for this vacancy, please submit your application and UN P11 form or a well elaborated C.V.

IMPORTANT:
✦ APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE ABOVE MENTIONED CLOSING DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATION SECTION OF UNHCR. Tel No.: 23511/231441
✦ WHEN POST IS TRANSFERRED TO AHWAR THE INCUMBENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO MOVE TO THE NEW DUTY STATION AS WELL.
✦ APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN SEALED ENVELOP TO:
Ms. Diana A. Sallam, HR UNHCR Sub. Office Aden
UNHCR SUB-OFFICE ADEN
P.O. Box: 6090,
Aden- Republic of Yemen Or by Fax # 02-234406

End of days: A universe in ruins

By: Dan Falk
COSMOS Magazine

When will the universe end? And will the ultimate apocalypse arrive with a bang or a whimper? We look into the far, far future, to the day the cosmos decays into a frozen featureless void.

Predicting how human society will evolve is fraught with difficulty. Our accelerating science and technology hint at unprecedented wealth and leisure, while the danger of natural disasters, epidemics, wars and countless other unpredictable factors could lead to a much darker future.

When it comes to purely physical systems – the Sun and its planets, the galaxy, the universe – we can see more clearly what lies ahead. The Solar System, for example, turns out to be a fairly simple physical system, and astronomers have understood stellar physics well enough for several decades now to predict, with fairly high confidence, the fate of our home star and its family of planets.

Our planet's fate is inexorably tied to that of our Sun, which has been shining for five billion years, with at least five billion to go. The Sun shines by burning hydrogen in its core, fusing it into helium. As the Sun's nuclear fuel supply starts to run out, it will begin some peculiar contortions.

Gravity will at first cause it to shrink in size – but this will make the Sun's core hotter, which will actually cause its outer layers to expand significantly. At this stage, five to seven billion years from now, the Sun will loom in our sky as a blazing 'red giant'.

A few hundred million years later – a short period in terms of the Sun's lifetime – it will undergo yet another phase of heating and expansion, shedding much of the material in its outer layers, and finally collapsing into a so-called 'white dwarf'. By this time, its mass will still be about three-quarters of its current value, but compressed into a sphere the size of the Earth.

The Sun's initial swelling during the onset of the red giant phase will destroy our blue planet. The additional sunlight reaching our atmosphere will cause global warming beyond Al Gore's worst nightmares. The oceans will evaporate into space, leaving only deserts; life as we know it will not be able to sustain itself. As astronomer Fred Adams of the University of

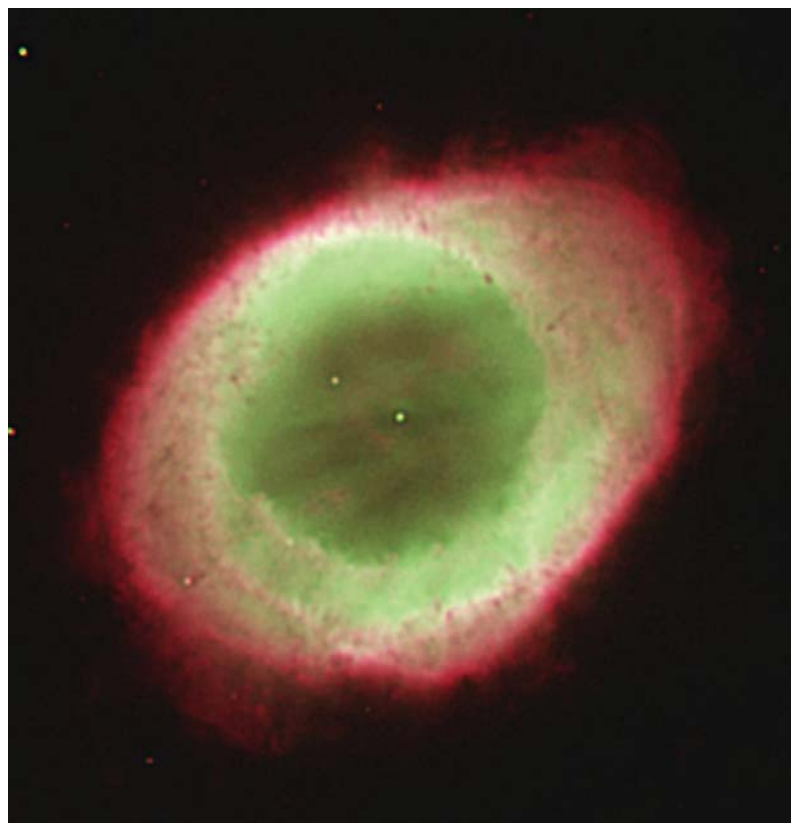


weakening gravitational attraction, the Earth's orbit will have expanded to about 370 million km. So we won't be engulfed by the swelling Sun – not yet.

What is left of our planet, however, will be scorched beyond recognition, baked by a crimson Sun that takes up half the sky. At its brightest, the Sun will shine with an intensity more than 4,000 times greater than today. As Adams put it in a recent paper: "Current estimates indicate that our biosphere will be essentially sterilized in about 3.5 billion years, so this future time marks the end of life on Earth."

The outer planets in our Solar System will fare somewhat better. Mars, for example, will become distinctly more hospitable over the next few billion years. In about six billion years, Adams says, the Red Planet will absorb about as much sunlight as the Earth does today. Will the next chapter in human history unfold on the fourth rock from the Sun?

Our planet, by this time devoid of life, will linger a bit longer. Although Earth will have moved to a wider orbit, Adams explains that it will meet with more resistance as it passes through matter from the Sun. This will ultimately cause Earth's orbit to decay, dragging the planet closer to the Sun, where it will meet its demise. In his paper, Adams describes the end of



Michigan, Ann Arbor, put it: "Within a few billion years, our world – now green and flowering with life – will closely resemble present-day Venus, with a hellish atmosphere fuelled by a runaway greenhouse effect."

According to recent calculations by Klaus-Peter Schröder, at the University of Guanajuato, Mexico, the Sun's diameter will eventually swell from its current 1.4 million km to as much as 358 million km. The inner planets, Mercury and Venus, will be swallowed outright by the raging Sun.

Given that the diameter of the Earth's orbit is only about 300 million km, our own prospects don't seem much better. But it's not quite that simple: because of the Sun's

planet Earth in two terrifyingly concise sentences: "Earth is thus evaporated, with its legacy being a small addition to the heavy element supply of the solar photosphere. This point in future history, approximately seven billion years from now, marks the end of our planet."

Happily, this billion-year time scale is inconceivably long compared to the 200,000 years or so that our species has been around, let alone the few millennia in which we've been using technology. So perhaps we can dare to imagine that we will have spread out across the galaxy – or at least beyond our doomed planet – before the Earth's demise. So let us turn, then, to the long-term prospects for the universe itself.

Isaac Newton imagined a static cosmos of infinite space and time. In such a universe, it would be reasonable to conceive of an infinite future for our species or its remote descendants. But the discoveries of 20th century physics changed that picture, and after the Big Bang model began to solidify, astronomy textbooks typically described two possible fates for our universe.

First, if the average density of the universe were great enough, the universe would be 'closed': gravity would eventually halt its expansion and the universe would start to contract, ultimately collapsing in a kind of reverse Big Bang, or 'Big Crunch'.

Alternatively, if its average density were lower than this threshold, the universe would be 'open': it would expand forever and all processes in the universe would gradually cease, in accordance with the second law of thermodynamics (which says, essentially, that the amount of disorder in the universe must always increase, and that systems tend towards equilibrium). The universe would become ever darker, colder and less hospitable to life.

The 20th century American poet Robert Frost captured the essence of the two possibilities in 1923 with a famous poem 'Fire and Ice': "Some say the world will end in fire! Some say in ice". Until the final decades of the 20th century, this was the best we could do: the universe would suffer one of these fates, but we could not say which one.

But the universe had more surprises in store, and as the century drew to a close, it delivered a whopper. In the late 1990s, astronomers were studying the properties of distant supernovae when they found something remarkable: the universe wasn't just expanding – the rate of expansion was accelerating. The rate of expansion had been decelerating until sometime around seven billion years ago, at which time we entered a new era of ever-faster expansion.

What could possibly be causing the expansion of the universe to accelerate? The Big Bang explosion would have given everything an outward push – but astronomers and physicists thought that the force of gravity ought to be slowing that expansion. They concluded that there must be some kind of intangible energy that works against gravity – some energy that is literally pushing all of the galaxies away from each other. No one knows exactly what that entity is; for now it has been labeled 'dark energy'.

One thing we do know about dark energy: the extra 'push' it delivers would seem to guarantee an open, ever-expanding cosmos. Today astronomers look out across the universe and see galaxies lumped together in clusters, with those clusters grouped together in superclusters. The superclusters, in turn, appear to be strung out in vast string-like filaments that stretch for hundreds of millions of light years across the cosmos. Gravity has crafted these structures – but dark energy will tear them apart.

The discovery of dark energy came at an awkward time for Adams, who had just published his book on the long-term fate of the cosmos, *The Five Ages of the Universe* (with co-author

Greg Laughlin). How does the presence of dark energy affect his forecast? "Perhaps the most important update is that we now 'know' that the universe is accelerating," he told me by e-mail (using quote marks to emphasize the fact that, in science, no result is ever 100 per cent certain). "Since the expansion of the universe is speeding up, essentially no more cosmic structure will form."

In other words, those clusters and superclusters and stringy filaments are the end of the line in terms of cosmic evolution. "The things that we have now in the universe will be all that you get – ever," Adams said.

Thanks to dark energy, those large-scale structures will gradually disintegrate, and the universe will eventually look very different from what we see today. Things will appear fairly normal for the first few trillion years; stars will continue to shine and any planets they may harbor could be reasonably hospitable places. Adams calls this the 'stelliferous era' (meaning 'filled with stars'); it is the era we now inhabit. (The first of Adams's eras is the 'primordial era', which covers roughly the first million years of cosmic history, from the Big Bang to the creation of the first stars.)

Eventually, the stars will exhaust their nuclear fuel, and – perhaps 100 trillion years from now – no new stars will be able to form. The stelliferous era will have come to an end, and we will enter what Adams calls the 'degenerate era'. The most prominent objects in the universe at this stage will become 'degenerate stellar objects' – essentially, the wasted cores of stars that no longer shine. Ordinary stars will have evolved into white dwarfs, while heavier stars will become ultra-dense neutron stars or black holes.

Ultimately, we shouldn't get too attached to these stellar remnants either, Adams cautions. After a mind-numbing period of time, white dwarfs and neutron stars will disintegrate through a process called proton decay, in which solid matter gives way to radiation. The lifetime of a proton is not yet known, but theory suggests that they last for 1030 to 1040 years. These are very large numbers indeed; the age of the universe at the moment is only about 1010 years.

After that point, the only sizable objects left in the universe will be black holes, and we enter the aptly-named 'black hole era'. Black holes are the most enduring objects that our universe and the laws of physics are able to craft. And yet they, too, must succumb to the endless time of an expanding universe. Black holes will ultimately disappear, evaporating by a process known as Hawking radiation – a quantum-mechanical process first described by British physicist Stephen Hawking in the 1970s. A black hole with the mass of the Sun may last for 1065 years; a supermassive black hole may endure for 10100 years.

After the last black hole has disappeared in a puff of Hawking radiation, the universe will be nearly empty. All that will remain will be a sparse flotilla of fundamental particles, drifting endlessly across a frozen, featureless void. Adams calls this final epoch the 'dark era'.

If we could somehow transport ourselves to this distant era, what would we see? "Very little," says Adams. "The universe would be very, very dark, very diffuse." All that will remain is a thin 'soup' of particles "and perhaps other things that we don't know about."

Not much will happen in this rarefied environment, Adams explains. Occasionally, an electron will bind with a positron to form an atom of 'positronium' – but even these will eventually disintegrate. Electrons and positrons can also directly annihilate each other. "Except for these low-level annihilation events," says Adams, "the universe is a very low-energy, low-key kind of place ... A sea of darkness."

Perhaps T.S. Eliot was close to the mark in his poem, "The Hollow Men": "This is the way the world ends! Not with a bang but a whimper."

It is hard to think of anything more depressing than this slow decline of the cosmos into eternal darkness. But here goes: because of dark energy's unforgiving push, the night sky of the remote future will be far less rich than the one we see today, and astronomers of that era – if they exist and can exist – will have no inkling of the vast and complex cosmos that once existed.

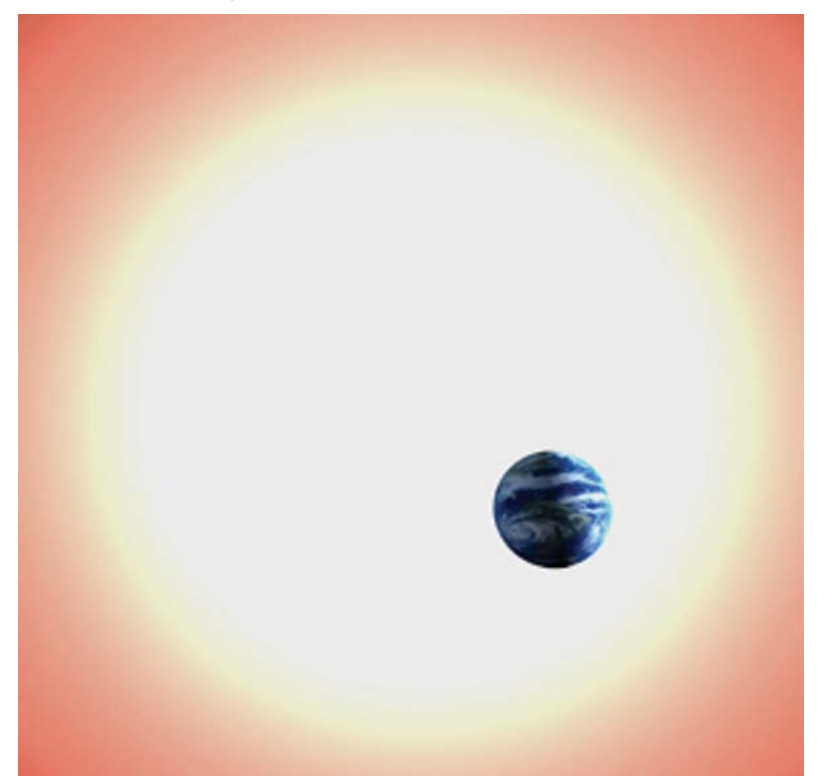
Our galaxy, the Milky Way, and our

closest neighbor, the Andromeda Galaxy, are bound together by gravity; together with a sprinkling of dwarf galaxies, they make up the so-called Local Group. The billions of other galaxies beyond the Local Group are not gravitationally bound to us, and the expansion of the universe, driven by dark energy, will eventually push them out of view. The most distant objects will be the first to disappear – "cloaked behind a cosmological horizon," as Adams puts it. Nearer galaxies will follow, slipping away one by one.

By 100 billion years from now, give or take, even the Virgo cluster – the next-closest cluster of galaxies beyond the Local Group – will have disappeared over the cosmic horizon. We will be then completely isolated from the rest of the universe: beyond the handful of galaxies that make up our Local Group, our telescopes will reveal only blackness. All of those other clusters suffer the same fate; each of them will be similarly isolated from their neighbours. Should astronomers exist in those other realms, their telescopes, too, will reveal nothing.

Our Local Group will still see some action: our galaxy and the Andromeda Galaxy are currently moving toward each other, and they are expected to collide – or rather, merge – in about six billion years. (The merger will not directly affect most stars: stars are very far apart compared to their individual diameters, so a typical star in our galaxy will not undergo a collision with a star from Andromeda.) In the long run, the Milky Way, Andromeda and the other smaller galaxies of the Local Group will merge into one large conglomeration.

When our Local Group becomes a universe unto itself, astronomers will have things to aim their telescopes at locally but will be ignorant of the universe's overall structure. According to Lawrence Krauss of Case Western Reserve University in Ohio,



astronomers of this distant era will be hard pressed to infer that anything like a Big Bang had ever occurred.

With those distant galaxies out of view, it will no longer be possible to measure their recession speeds, as U.S. astronomer Edwin Hubble did in the 1920s. The same goes for the other main piece of evidence in support of the Big Bang – the cosmic microwave background radiation (or CMB), sometimes described as 'the echo of the Big Bang', discovered in the 1960s. As the CMB radiation gets stretched out to longer and longer wavelengths, it will be harder and harder to detect.

Krauss has said that astronomers living at that time will be misled by their observations: "It will lead them to the wrong conclusion about what the universe is doing," he said in a recent interview. "The universe will look static, and that's vastly wrong, because the universe is expanding so fast they can't see it."

This is troubling on many levels. It is naturally disheartening to think of knowledge that we have today no longer being available in the remote future; perhaps it will make us strive to preserve that knowledge at all costs. It may also make us wonder just how confident we should be in our interpretations of what we see in the sky right now.

We have seen how the universe is destined to end in darkness; what, then, is the fate of life? In an open universe,

it would seem that every entity, every being, every thought, must come to an end. As philosopher Bertrand Russell once put it: "All the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction ... The whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins."

The Roman poet Lucretius must have had a similar vision in mind two millennia earlier when he wrote:

Again, perceivest not,
How stones are also conquered by Time?

Not how lofty towers ruin down,
And boulders crumble? Not how shrines of gods

And idols crack outworn?
In the late 1970s, however, physicist Freeman Dyson from the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey suggested an alternative. Dyson defines life as any entity that can process information. Because this requires energy and generates heat, it would seem that an expanding universe offers less and less usable energy to keep such a system functioning. But Dyson imagined a way out: he suggested that life could, in effect, 'hibernate' for ever-increasing periods of time. By lengthening the span of the hibernation periods – effectively lowering their 'metabolism', so to speak – life could endure more or less forever, Dyson asserted.

The discovery of dark energy, however, may spoil Dyson's idea. Krauss, together with colleague Glenn Starkman, has argued that in a universe containing dark energy, life is doomed. Life requires energy, and in an ever-expanding universe it becomes more and more difficult to collect and harness that energy. "The cosmic dilution of energy is truly dire," they wrote recently.

As we become isolated in our

respective island universes, the resources at our disposal become strictly limited. With finite resources, any living creatures (or equivalent machines) would have a finite memory. Finite information, they argue, implies a finite number of thoughts.

"Eternity would become a prison, rather than an endlessly receding horizon of creativity and exploration," they assert. In the long run, "life, certainly in its physical incarnation, must come to an end."

This is not a particularly happy outlook for life, the universe and everything. But perhaps we can take away something positive from our speculation. First of all – and I seem to recall the late astronomer and author Carl Sagan saying something like this toward the end of his TV series *Cosmos* back in the 1980s: all those billions of years that lie ahead offer the opportunity to do a great deal of good. Further, it is quite impressive that with our finite hominid brains we have been able to peer so far ahead, with at least some degree of confidence.

And isn't it intriguing that the fate of the universe – trillions upon trillions of years from now – is clearer to us today than the fate of our own civilization just a few centuries ahead?

Dan Falk is a science journalist based in Toronto, Canada. He is the author of *In Search of Time: The Science of a Curious Dimension*.

Words of Wisdom



It is in the hands of the people in charge of this country to make our transformation towards democracy real and meaningful. It would be unfortunate if the change in Yemen remains merely a show or something superficial. Our politicians need to believe in preparing for the 21st century. To do that, they have to internalize

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

OUR
OPINIONThings that could
go right in 2009

Despite the fact that year 2009 has started off on a sad note regionally, i.e. the attacks against Gaza, 2009 might as well be a good year for Yemen provided that a few issues are resolved the right way.

There are three main factors that dominate the country's political sphere. There are the northern rebellion of the Houthis, the southern movement asking for separation, and the opposition parties wanting to simply overturn the ruling system.

Yet in each of these three issues there is a potential benefit that is very possible to achieve. For one, the actual war in the north has ended in July last year, so basically this is a year for reconstruction and mending broken links. The committee for reconstructing Sa'ada, chaired by the governor, made a list of estimated damages in December last year, and budgets have been allocated. Regardless of how this list is received by some Houthis who are still holding grudges, reconstruction is always a positive thing. In fact, seeing homes being rebuilt and children re-enrolled in schools is very likely to ease the tensions to a great extent.

The undercover negotiations and international pressure on the Yemeni government are likely to postpone the parliamentary elections due on April 27 this year. The fact that Parliament has been suspending its municipal polls for four years now is a strong indication that this option is more likely than entering the elections under vague circumstances. The opposition coalition, or the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), has not given a clear cut decision whether they will really boycott the elections despite the fact that they boycotted the registration process. This gives hope that a compromise can be reached, provided there is time to work it out with the delay of elections.

And finally the secessionist movement, which has been aided by the deteriorating economic conditions of the country as a whole, is probably going to ease by mid 2009 as the political environment will be encouraging dialogue. By then I suppose that the JMP would have come to terms with the ruling party and reconstruction in the north would be going smoothly.

On the economic level, by May 2009, Yemen will have a great new source of income as the Yemeni Liquid Natural Gas Company would start exporting natural gas. However, oil prices worldwide have gone down. As a result, Yemen is expecting a fiscal deficit averaging 12.2 percent of the GDP in 2009-10 according to the Economist Intelligence Unit, forcing Yemen to seek more foreign donor support. On the bright side, Britain, and the EU, which are the largest donors to Yemen, have already committed to increasing their support to Yemen's economy.

All these factors together are likely to increase the average GDP growth by 5.2 percent in 2009-10. Moreover, also according to the Economist Intelligence Unit, the average inflation in 2009 is expected to decline rapidly, to 7.7 percent, owing to the sharp drop in global commodity prices forecasted for 2009. This means that the global fall in prices will be relatively reflected in Yemen.

Finally, for those who are earning in dollars, this year will be a good year as the Yemeni Riyal's value will have to depreciate for a few months until the US dollar's value is strengthened in Yemen in order to decrease inflation levels.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Formal democracy produces
only failed experiences

By: Iskandar Shaher

The various political parties in Yemen reached the climatic point of rage. Therefore, they felt that they are required to avoid being dilated by peoples' heat or shrunk by the ruler's coolness.

Obviously, rules of the game will change if they haven't been already changed. The inventors are buried while players are in a field of play with less professionals and more balls. The ruling party is the only one that may know what Mr. President wants. What Mr. President wants is neither a puzzle nor trick, as it is the same thing wanted by him thirty years ago.

Undoubtedly, what is wanted by Mr. President doesn't resemble the thought of Mohammed Abdulmalik Al-Mutawakil from the government, nor can it be likened to the thought of Jarralah Omar, from the opposition. It has nothing to do with will of the people.

Opposition parties' newspapers obtain information from one source, but they are satisfied with this, even if they are not allowed to diversify the sources of their information. I would like to say that the opposition newspapers don't want to be an alternative to Al-Thawra Official Daily, controlled by its Editor Ali Al-Arawi or Al-Gomhouria Official Daily controlled

by its Editor Al-Yousifi. These newspapers don't inspire to exceed their usual limits of obtaining information.

When it comes to private newspapers, some of which turn to operate under the cover of Human Rights Watch, they have another totally different story.

All the editors of private newspapers have their own excuses. They didn't come from another planet. They belong to the same political parties in Yemen that injected them. The result was more parties, more newspapers, more speeches, more tricks and more lies. Eventually, the top scorer is one, the winner is one and the loser is one, whom we all know.

Whether we think loudly according to the methodology of Al-Mutawakil, a government official, or whisper according to the style of his co-workers in the government, who claim to be carrying the flag of compliant democracy.

All those officials preferred that Al-Mutawakil, who is a senior academic, should speak on their behalf, and therefore is entitled to think loudly. On the other hand, politicians, affiliated with the Joint Meeting Parties, should think silently.

The result is one, which is that of lengthening survival of phantom and illusion and preparing the throne of power for the son of current President.

People realized well how ruling and opposition parties behave

Undoubtedly, thinking about formal or compliant democracy implies thinking about compliant elections too. And both sides seem to have agreed on affixing and backing speech of Mr. President that there is no national crisis in the minds of those who think about crises.

The best thing for leaderships of both ruling General People's Congress and JMP is that they should stop exploiting this homeland for their failed experiences.

Frankly speaking, Yemeni people have realized well that leaderships of both sides are opportunistic and want to make their own interests at the expense of people's living. People turned to pay the price for the wrong policies followed by the ruling party to ensure its longer stay in power amid presence of passive opposition meant to show international organizations that Yemen has democracy, and government and opposition as well.

Such irresponsible policies are meant to help the ruling party and government obtain support from international organizations under the guise that they care about democracy and multi-party system in Yemen, which don't really exist.

Source: Al-Tagheer.com

Arab armies changed into
special guards to protect leaders

By: Moneer Al-Mawri

My father, who is currently residing in the American State of Michigan, narrated to me that he left Yemen in the 1940s and he used to move freely between Egypt and Palestine as there was no barriers or closed crossings to prevent people from traveling. The First Arab-Israeli War broke out in 1948, following foundation of the State of Israel while my father was in Al-Quds.

My father was among those who migrated to Jordan and then he moved to Kuwait before migrating to the U.S.A. in 1975. He acknowledged that imbalance in force is the direct reason behind defeat of Arabs, and this information contradicts what we read in schoolbooks that seven Arab armies from Yemen, Saudi Arab, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon engaged in the war against the Haganah bands.

During our reading of schoolbooks, we believed that the seven armies outnumbered those bands while outdated weapons, not corrupt regimes, are the mean reason behind failure of Arab armies.

Sixty years have passed since the calamity. Now, fighting is taking place in a small area called "Gazza" where the Israeli fighter jets throw their heavy loads of destructive weapons on innocent women and children while the Egyptian plans, on the other hand, still are confined by Camp David Treaty.

The Yemeni aircrafts are still tired after hitting Sa'ada and are preparing to strike rebels in the southern governorate of Abyan.

The Saudi aircrafts changed into "a red crescent" to treat the wounded

while Fleet of Prince Al-Walid Bin Talal is enough to do the job against Zionists in Gaza and leave other military fleets to do other tasks.

There is also the fleet of Syrian fighter jets, which is still waiting to reach strategic balance before it takes off while thousands of Lebanese missiles that reach beyond Haifa didn't react to the tragedy suffered by Gaza citizens, and the Jordanian Arab Army considers the West Bank, not Gaza, its sole battleground. There is also the fleet of Iraqi fighters that escaped to Iran during the Kuwait Liberation War.

The standing imbalance between the Arab and Israel forces surprises us since the Arabs number 300 million while the Israelis worldwide are even less than .04% of the Arab population. Consequently, we have to question "Where are the Arab armies?" Were they changed into special guards? Surely, the answer is "YES". The Arab leaders no longer have armies. They only have brigades of guards to protect corrupt regimes.

Arab leaders: real enemies of Gazza
In short, the Arab leaders currently rely on oppressive security institutions, which are seen as an alternative to the national military institution through which they came to power. They also rely on armies of special guards.

Palestine in their eyes is nothing more than a televised program or charitable societies for exaggeration at the expense of their brothers who are subjected to the cruelest strikes by the most sophisticated and destructive types of weapons.

The innocent people of Gazza doesn't battle with the Israeli army only, as they are also confronting with more dangerous enemies. Who are these enemies? They are the Arab leaders, who never feel ashamed of

being traitors with the new occupation. They don't care about their suffering brothers in Gazza.

They stay in luxurious rooms in the Gulf states and never stop instigating people of Gazza to be adventurous in confronting an Israeli army, equipped with the most sophisticated weapons in the world.

The Palestinian cause has turned out to be an issue for ill-spirited people, most notably the corrupt Palestinian political leadership and the Arab leaders, who are even more corrupt, to make interest on.

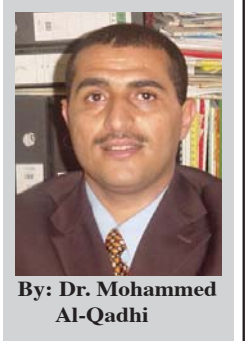
It is a shame on the Arab leaders to behave this way and show unexpected positions about what happens in Gazza.

Source: Al-Masdar.com

SILVER LINING

Fighting the
wrong battles!

It seems the ruling regime in Yemen is suffering from what we can call *Kharaf Siyasi* or political senility. It has been producing one initiative after the other to reform the Arab League, Islamic Conference



By: Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi

Organization, to mediating a compromise between Hamas and Fatah parties in Palestine, proposing an Arab and then Islamic summit on Gaza and orchestrating a new initiative to reach an agreement between the two conflicting Hamas and Fatah.

Of course, the recent attack on Gaza has demonstrated a confused Yemen foreign policy. President Ali Abdullah Saleh was one of the first Arab leaders to call for an emergency Arab summit. His government staged several anti-Israeli assaults on Gaza. However, Yemen suddenly decided not to attend the Doha summit.

And sardonically, the president called for an Islamic. And on his way to attend the Arab economic summit in Kuwait, the man said he would propose to the Arab leaders the establishment of an Arab Union. And when nobody cared about such a proposal, the president came back to Yemen and the outcome was a new plan to bring peace between warring Palestinian groups Hamas and Fatah. The government already in March 2008 tried to bring the two groups together and they signed an agreement but with no concrete results on the ground.

"What the hell are these guys doing?" a friend of mine asked with anger while he heard the news about this new plan. He is completely right. Why does the president try to impose his nose in every problem here and there? His hands are full of problems that need his and his people attention.

Why does he not spend his time thinking of plans to heal the wounds that cut the deepest? He should busy his mind with thinking of ways out from the social unrest in the south, the political deadlock between his party and the opposition coalition, how to fight the uphill battle against poverty and lawlessness and how to uphold peace in Sa'ada.

The regime is fighting the wrong battles. The Gaza war is a part of a political showdown between regional forces involving Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, Syria and others. These countries have their own political and financial weight enabling them to be influential players in such battles. This influence is something that Yemen lacks and therefore, any effort it exercises is prone to failure.

To drive the point home, I believe the regime should save its energy to develop plans that can help to find out anything outside that can help address its domestic problems. And when they finish, they can put up plans for regional conflicts. Do you not think so?

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



By: Samer

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Al-Motamar.net, affiliated with the General People's Congress (ruling party)
Thursday, Jan. 22, 2009

Top Stories

- Wheat price decrease to YR 4,500 per 50 kg as government closes 37 stores
- Academics warn JMP against hindering upcoming parliamentary elections

Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) deliberated to shift their attention away from efforts meant to bring them and the ruling party together and reach a compromise on the upcoming parliamentary elections as part of its strange opposition, the website reported, adding that those parties need to understand the appropriate means for practicing opposition.

According to the website, the opposition parties lack true vision on necessities of the political action, they usually find themselves ineffective in dealing with pressing issues on the ground, as well as progressing toward a better future, most notably as the JMP platform doesn't care about national principles and sovereignty.

The various statements and declarations made by the JMP to escape reaching a compromise on the upcoming parliamentary elections, scheduled for April 2009, constituted the most prominent practice followed by those opposition parties since the

ruling party first renewed its call for dialogue with them.

To investigation JMP's vision meant to hinder the upcoming elections, political activist Ali Mohammed Hussein stressed the necessity of JMP member parties compromising with the ruling party to conduct the parliamentary elections on April 2009. He warned the opposition coalition against attempting to hinder the elections.

On a side note, the website reported that Vice President Abduh Raboh Mansor Hadi, who is also Secretary General of the General People's Congress GPC received Tuesday a delegation of the European Commission headed by Patrick Dupont the European Commission representative in the General Directorate for External Relations.

In the meeting, the vice president reviewed steps taken by Yemen in areas of democracy and multiparty system and the freedom of expression and press.

He affirmed that the political leadership represented by President Ali Abdullah Saleh strongly believes in democracy as solution to all pressing issues, praising concern and assistance of the European Union for supporting democratic development in Yemen.

The vice president indicated the results of talks held with the opposition parties, saying that JMP member parties rejected to present names of their representatives to the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (SCER).

He said that the ruling GPC, which is responsible in accordance with law

and constitution in front of the people, went ahead with preparations for holding the upcoming parliamentary elections on time.

Hadi said that GPC could not offer further stoops to the JMP, welcoming any proposal by the European delegation in this regard.



Al-Sahwah.net, affiliated with the Islah Party
Thursday, Jan. 22, 2009

Top Stories

- Sheikh Hamoud Al-Dharihi urges Obama to release Al-Moayyad and Zayed
- Lahj Prosecution accuses 7 conciliation detainees of hindering elections

Team of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, in Lahj governorate denounced what was described as "the addition of fabricated charges against many political detainees for taking part in the Reconciliation and Forgiveness Festival, which was held on Jan. 13 in Aden, the website reported.

The website quoted Lawyer Khalid Ali Nasser as saying, "We are shocked at how charges directed by Aden Security Department to those detainees were changed into other accusations.

The department accused those detainees of carrying grenades and

weapons, and instigating citizens to resist against policemen, entering Radfan Platform, bombing a security vehicle and hindering preparations for the upcoming elections. Earlier, we heard about totally different charges from these."

The lawyer claimed that the responsible authorities immediately release all those detainees, saying, "If the charges filed against them are authentic, why are not these detainees sued at the relevant court. How it is possible to charge those prisoners on events that took place more than one year ago."

Nasser confirmed that such charges are fabricated and baseless, and therefore are meant to intimidate them inside jails in order to coerce them to stop expressing themselves freely.

Those security procedures disclosed the authority's false allegations of democracy, Nasser continued, adding the government must put an end to such constitutional and legal violations. "Government officials should be the first people to be abiding by the Constitution and laws," the lawyer expressed.

Aden security authorities released all those detained over involvement in the Reconciliation and Forgiveness Festival in Aden with the exception of seven of them, who remained held in Lahj's Sabr Prison, namely they are: Nasser Al-Jahwari, Adel Hassan, Mahdi Ubaid Hussein, Nabil Mohammed Saleh, Mulhim Fadhil Hussein, Faisal Jubran Abdu, and journalist Wejdi Al-Shuaibi.

The Radfan-based First Instance Prosecution began investigating the

first six defendants, who are from Radfan district and directed fabricated charges against them. The investigation process was attended by a HOOD team, represented by lawyers Khalid Ali Nasser and Mohammed Saeed Al-Ban. The event was also attended by Aref Al-Halimi and Naseer Hassan from the Aden-based lawyers union.

On the other hand, the Tawr Al-Baha Prosecution began investigating journalist Wejdi Al-Shuaibi, who was arrested while covering the festival. He was not allowed to speak until his defense-advocate arrived.

The journalist sent out a letter from inside his detention explaining how he was detained while covering the event. In his letter, he stated that he was taken from one prison to another three times, adding he was treated as a criminal and was rushed among those prisoners who committed massive crimes.

Al-Ghad.net, an independent news website
Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2009

Top Stories

- International organizations press Yemen to hold free and fair elections
- Preliminary agreement between GPC and JMP to postpone parliamentary elections

Informed political sources confirmed that a prospective agreement by the government and opposition is due to be declared soon to postpone the upcoming

parliamentary elections for 4 - 6 months during which time both sides will prepare for the elections.

In statements to Al-Ghad Weekly, sources from the ruling and opposition parties identically stated that the agreement is the result of secretly run dialogues in order to ensure that both sides reach a comprehensive agreement to end the current political crisis and create good climates to hold the upcoming elections in peaceful democratic atmospheres.

Requesting to remain unnamed, the sources indicated that current dialogues are focusing on opposition's demands in order for opposition parties to accept participating in the upcoming elections after the agreement was made in principle to postpone them.

The sources clarified that the agreement, due to be declared in detail following approval of all the points listed within the dialogue agenda, reflect both sides' desire to end ongoing controversy over the elections, most notably after the ruling party leaders became convinced that is useless to run in the elections amid absence of major opposition parties.

The ruling party leaders realized that growing local and foreign pressures stress the necessity of involving all the political parties in the elections.

The same sources pointed out that there are some figures in the ruling and opposition parties, who object to this agreement, adding that those figures attempt by all means to foil the agreement.

Arab leaders: Isn't it time for change?

By: Maged Thabet Saleh
majed_thabet@hotmail.com

A word of thanks is to be sent only to some of the Arab leaders. A word of shame, on the other hand, is to be sent to the others. The aggressive and disproportionate war on Gaza was launched with a green light from some of these so-called Arab leaders. They have watched the daily results of the Israeli attacks on the civilians in Gaza, but have done nothing. Worse still, they have supported Israeli forces firstly in implementing the siege on Gaza and then in killing the children, women and defenseless civilians.

For a week, the Emir of Qatar was calling Arabs for a summit in any country. Such a summit was called the "Urgent Gaza Summit" and since it was urgent, it was expected that all Arab countries would participate.

What happened was actually shameful. Only some welcomed the summit, while most of the others hesitated and ignored the call as if they were not part of the Arab world at all. Some Arab leaders were shy to participate as if they were going to commit an immoral mistake. In fact, it was not a matter of shyness, but a matter of following the commands of their "senior masters"!

In a press conference, the Qatari prime minister has shed light on who commands the Arab Leaders. In his words, he said: "They would run to America or anywhere else in the world, if the American president called them for a meeting". Yes, this is the current status of the Arab leaders who seem blind to see their indignity. They receive commands from the masters who gave them the posts as presidents, kings and princes. They have different names, but they are not more than slaves.

Actually, a lot of thanks should be

given to Qatar for its efforts in this summit. A lot of thanks also should be given to Venezuela, Iran and other non-Arab countries for participating in the summit. Thanks to Arab countries which participated in the summit. Though they should not be thanked because it is their duty to do this, they are thanked because they are much better than the other Arab countries. What surprised the world was the careless response of the so-called Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas.

Mahmoud Abbas refused to participate in the summit though it was held urgently only for the Israeli attacks on Gaza, which is supposed to be a part of Palestine. According to the Qatari prime minister, Abbas did not participate because he did not receive permission. To tell the truth, I am confused by the meaning of the word "permission" here. Was it a permit to participate in the summit or a permission to leave his

homeland for Gaza? Whether it is the first or the second, both indicate the real status of the "Unauthorized Palestinian Authority".

Hamas and other resistance movements have been responding to the Israeli attacks with their simple and disproportionate weapons. Their faith, their dignity and their sense of patriotism were the best weapons they had to fight the cowardly Israeli soldiers. They fought and faced the Israeli forces without giving up their principles, without surrendering to America or Israel as has happened to most, if not all the Arab leaders. Thanks to Hamas and all the other resistance movements because they do really resist not only to save the dignity of Palestine, but to save the dignity of all the Muslims and Arabs around the world.

It really is a shame. We see Hamas and other Palestinian movements fighting to show the world that Arabs and Muslims are still there with

dignity and freedom, but the Arabs leaders themselves say "we are not there". The Arab leaders turned a cold shoulder on such movements when they asked them for help. In reality, such Arab leaders share in the fighting - not with the movements of resistance, but against them.

That is what happened and, I think, a clear example of it is the role played by "The Mother of the World", Egypt. Really it hurts when we hear that Egypt shouldered Israel in its siege on Gaza. Egypt not only stopped the weapons from reaching Gaza, but it also closed all the borders to stop medicine, food, and other essential materials of life from entering the Gaza Strip. Actually, the latter is not Egypt's doing - I am sure that it is a free and revolutionary nation - but that of respectful and moderate President Husni Mubarak, as he is smoothly called by his masters.

Gaza has paid with the price of

about 1,500 martyrs till now. Arab leaders paid nothing. They did not devote even a little time to attend the summit so that there might be hope to find out a solution. They cannot devote any time, and will not devote any time because they are worried about their positions and because they have problems among themselves. It is shameful to have leaders like these. One hopes that they have learned the lesson. The reconciliation between some Arab leaders at the summit in Kuwait was really a positive step. One hopes that there will be no more problems among them, and that together they will step towards Arab unity.

Finally, I would like to say long life to our dear brothers, resistant fighters of the whole world, and I would like to extend my best heartfelt greetings and limitless respect to every man, woman and child martyred or injured in these inhuman attacks on Gaza.

Democracy according to the way of the "Taliban"

By: Mohammed An'am

We will never budge from our commitment to democracy, whatsoever is said about Yemen's crumbling democratic fortresses. We will never give up on it, no matter what some disparagers say, insisting that Yemen is not a democracy and that such a way of government is an idea whose time has come.

We say that sacred democracy is a form of government that expresses the will of the people and translates its hopes and ambitions. Those who believe that democracy comes from the heads of inclusive parties - and not from the people themselves - aim to achieve the same target that the

Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) demand in the context of their plot against democracy.

One of the most important principles of establishing a democratic regime is establishing the sovereignty of the law. Other important principles include the election of authority figures by the people as well as the guarantee of public freedoms.

Therefore, our disagreement with the JMP is not about elections, as this matter is no longer a source of doubt. Rather, our disagreement has become about the democratic system itself, namely, a clear multiparty democratic system.

The JMP want to bomb democracy with the biggest quantity of "TNT" explosives that they have. This is clear through their demands under

the so-called vision of the JMP to conduct free and fair elections. What they really want is a plan not only to destroy democracy but also to Somalize and Afghanize Yemen.

Attempts of exceeding the Yemeni constitution and its laws is looked at by the JMP as a matter not worth their attention. Highlighting the idea that reconciliation of the multiparty system means achieving a high level of sacredness is a kind of silliness that that no wise person can ever discuss, let alone apply.

These audacious demands posed by the JMP confirm that there is a conspiracy agenda hidden from the people which is deliberately hidden in order to accomplish their plans without resistance. It is not logical that the JMP dares to conspire against the country and its people.

The Yemeni people believe that no difference exists between ridding the state of its enemies through electoral boxes or through violence. The Yemeni people believe that it is time to purify the country from the impurity of inclusive people and rid the country of the enemies of unification and democracy forever.

Yes: it is time to be serious. We must not merely scare the enemies of democracy. Rather, we must use all available means to ensure the eradication of all those who attempt to harm the accomplishments of the Yemeni people, namely, democracy.

It is impossible for our people to accept a dialog imposed on it by leaders of parties, who are certainly criminal gangs whose hands are still stained with the blood of innocent Yemeni martyrs.

It is impossible to coexist with the Taliban of Al-Yadumi and Al-A'nisi, militates of Yassin, or mercenaries of Al-Atwani. It is impossible to coexist with their followers who say in public that the Yemeni unification is not sacred.

Therefore, it has become visible that dialog with them is merely a danger to democracy; dialogue alone cannot protect democracy. Hence the people should defend their interests and put an end to the mockery of the JMP egotists.

Democratic experiences in the world teach us that taking such a pathway is not full of roses or sprayed with Paris perfumes. Rather, it is a path that people don't cross until after they offer their best sons as sacrifices in order to pass it. There is no democracy in the world

practiced without a price paid by its peoples.

Since Yemenis have sacrificed thousands of martyrs in 1994 war for the sake of the unification, it seems that no one is exempted from paying dues of the democracy bill. The JMP leaders want to impose such dues on the people by force.

Democratic development is the goal of our people. However, the JMP want to take us back to chaos, choosing a non-state with a lack of principles over a democratic state full of principles and goals.

So they aim to drive us to collapse. Consequently, we have only one option available in our hands: we must protect democracy and sacrifice our blood for its sake.

Source: Al-Methaq

الشركة اليمنية للغاز الطبيعي المسال
Yemen LNG Company



Job Vacancies

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquefied natural gas processing plant at Balhaf on the Gulf of Aden which will export 6.7 million tons of LNG per annum. The project offices are based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now recruiting the temporary and permanent staff who will construct and manage the project.

All candidates must be Yemeni nationals

Job Title: Workshop Electrical Senior Technician – Ref. 217
Reports to: Workshop and HVAC Electrical Supervisor
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

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- Performs troubleshooting, diagnoses faults and executes repairs on all electrical equipment on the plant
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Qualifications Required:

- Relevant technical or Higher Diploma in an electrical discipline
- 8-10 years of industrial electrical workshop experience, of which 5 years minimum in Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry
- Understanding of Hazardous Area classifications, electrical schematic and wiring diagrams, and permit to work systems and electrical safety procedures
- Proven authorisation to perform electrical isolations
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English
- Good Knowledge of Microsoft Applications (word, excel...etc)

Job Title: Electrical Senior Technician - Start-up – Ref. 218
Reports to: Commissioning and Start-up Superintendent
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Daily interaction with direct supervisor and other technicians to plan, coordinate, oversee and discuss all matters related to Yemen LNG electrical equipment issues in the workshop/Offsite and LNG trains. External contacts on a periodic basis with contractor's representatives, with equipment/plant vendor's representatives
- Participates actively in the start-up for various electrical equipments, such as: Electrical Generators, Variable Speed Drive Systems, Power Distribution Control Systems, Power Management Systems, High, Medium and Low Voltage Switchboards, Numerical type Protection Relays, High Voltage/ Low Voltage Motors, Power and Distribution Transformer, Miscellaneous electrical equipments such as UPS/ Lighting and small power/ Motor Control Centre/ Earthing/ Cathodic Protection etc
- Performs troubleshooting, faults diagnosis and executes repairs on all electrical equipment, in process, utility and offsite areas of the LNG plant
- Provides information for preparing monthly reports (work completed, backlog, spare parts shortage, etc ...) for the section to be further submitted to hierarchy
- Coordinates and leads team of technicians in testing of LNG Plant electrical equipment

Qualifications Required:

- Relevant technical or Higher Diploma in a electrical discipline
- 8-10 years of the industrial electrical experience, out of which 5 years minimum in Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry
- Good understanding of permit to work system and electrical safety, the Hazardous area classification and the equipment to be used in different areas
- Proven authorized to perform electrical isolations, Capable to read the electrical schematic diagrams
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English
- Good Knowledge of Microsoft Applications (word, excel...etc)

Job Title: Workshop HVAC senior Technician – Ref. 219
Reports to: Workshop and HVAC Electrical Supervisor
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Daily interaction with direct supervisor and other technicians to plan, coordinate, oversee and discuss all matters related to HVAC electrical equipment issues in the workshop/Offsite and LNG trains. External contacts on a periodic basis with contractor's representatives, with equipment/plant vendor's representatives
- Participates actively in the maintenance and repair works for various HVAC equipments, such as:
York Chillers YCIV 1180 package with three compressor loops VSD control, Automatic PLC control system, Low Voltage Motors, Low Voltage Switchboards, HVAC Power & Control Panel, AHU Chilled Water Pump, Fresh Air Supply Fan, Air Cooled Condensers, DX Air Conditioning Units, 2DX Split System, Fan Coil Unit Chilled Water Pump, Fan Coil Units, Laboratory Fume Cupboard, Laboratory Safety Cabinet, Extract Fan
- Performs troubleshooting, faults diagnosis and executes repairs on all HVAC equipment of the LNG plant mentioned above
- Perform major overhauling activities for HVAC equipment of the LNG plant mentioned above

Qualifications Required:

- Relevant technical or Higher Diploma in a HVAC electromechanical discipline
- 8-10 years of the industrial HVAC experience, out of which 5 years minimum in Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry
- Good understanding of permit to work system and electrical safety, the Hazardous area classification and the equipment to be used in different areas
- Proven authorized to perform electrical isolations, Capable to read the electrical schematic diagrams
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English
- Good Knowledge of Microsoft Applications (word, excel...etc)

Job Title: Workshop Mechanical Senior Millwright – Ref. 220
Reports to: Workshop Mechanical Supervisor
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Carries out corrective maintenance, repairs and overhauls on a wide variety of rotating machinery equipment (all kind of pumps, compressors components, blowers, fin fan coolers, etc) at Balhaf mechanical workshop, including disassembly, parts replacement, executes repairs, assembly and testing
- Receives incoming work requests from the Mechanical Workshop Supervisor, discusses work required and estimates time and resources required to complete work. Also receives instructions and arranges for appropriate tools, diagrams and vendor manuals and catalogs
- Generate reports of findings, repairs, and corrective actions performed on the plant equipment carried under his supervision to the Mechanical Workshop Supervisor, including information for preparing monthly reports
- Maintains good housekeeping at workshop site and ensures tools and equipment are kept in good, safe operating condition. Replaces and stores tools in orderly and tidy manner
- Provides work direction and guidance to junior technicians and ensures the work is executed in accordance with Company safety rules and procedures

Qualifications Required:

- Higher Diploma, or equivalent, in a relevant technical discipline plus formal training in rotating machinery equipment
- 10 to 8 years' specific Maintenance experience in the oil refining, gas or petrochemical industry, LNG experience is an advantageous
- High level of knowledge, proven mastery and specialized on repairs, assembly and testing of rotating machinery equipment
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Good Knowledge of Microsoft Applications (word, excel...etc)

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Visit Yemen LNG's website at (WWW.YEMENLNG.COM).
- Go to Careers, then to Vacancies to enter our Web Application System.
- Register your personal and professional data in order to log in and apply, mentioning the title and the reference number of the position you are applying for.

- Do not make duplicate applications by fax, etc.
- Yemen LNG Company will contact the selected candidates for interview and further assessment.
- Applicants who are not contacted have not been successful but can still apply for future positions.

Closing Date: 4 February 2009

WWW.YEMENLNG.COM

الشركة اليمنية للغاز الطبيعي المسال
Yemen LNG Company



Job Vacancies

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquefied natural gas processing plant at Balhaf on the Gulf of Aden which will export 6.7 million tons of LNG per annum. The project offices are based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now recruiting the temporary and permanent staff who will construct and manage the project.

All candidates must be Yemeni nationals

Job Title: Electronics Senior Technician – Ref. 221
Reports to: Instrument Supervisor
Work Location: Balhaf

Main Responsibilities:

- Carries out maintenance, disassembly, cleaning, calibration and repair work on a variety of electronic equipment at the instrumentation workshop by using a variety of tools and test equipment. Reports back on condition as found, time spent, work carried out, as left, material used, and any further action required for each job undertaken. Equipment includes among others control boards, electronic cards, and any other kind of electronic device
- Examines faulty electronic equipment, establishes requirements and completes fault finding to board level and changing out of faulty elements as required. Carries out electronic equipment tests at the workshop and ensures correct operation of the equipment or components
- Ensures up date of technical documents (P&IDs, cause and effect diagram, circuit drawings, etc)
- Participates with the 'contractors and vendors' for the provision of specialist services on the electronic equipment and Fire and Gas equipment
- Provides technical information for analysis, records in SAP and continuous improvement
- Coordinates and leads team of technicians in testing of LNG Plant Fire and Gas Equipment

Qualifications Required:

- Relevant technical or Higher Diploma in a relevant technical discipline
- 8-10 years of Maintenance experience in the Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry in one of the disciplines listed above
- Solid understanding of Instrument maintenance practices and Fire and Gas Equipment Testing
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English

Job Title: Fire Fighting Training Instructor - Ref. 222
Reports to: Fire Fighting Superintendent
Work Location: Balhaf

Main Responsibilities:

- Supervises, conducts, controls and maintains the HSE and Fire, rescue training operation for all Company employees
- Conducts class room instruction, outside practical drills, demonstrations and participates in emergency drill / exercise and emergency response team
- Liaises with other department in order to complete the Yemen LNG HSE & fire fighting training matrix, to be able to prepare and conduct specific training: HAZID / HAZOP / Risk assessment / Cause Tree Analysis, Incident investigation and Permit To Work training
- Prepares training materials (PPT presentation, questionnaire, booklet ...) and instruct trainees on particular subject and maintain appropriate files and records
- Assesses training needs, developing safety training modules according to training matrix, and facilitates their delivery and maintain training equipment in order to be ready at all time

Qualifications Required:

- High level of knowledge and specialized on industrial safety and fire or internationally recognised Fire and safety qualification
- Knowledge of ISO 9001 & 14001
- 10 years experienced in specific Fire Protection System, Fire Fighting Equipment maintenance and test in the oil / gas refining petrochemical industry
- 5 years minimum experienced in fire fighting and SAFETY training
- SCBA training qualification updated
- Good Knowledge of Microsoft Applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)

Job Title: Fire Brigade Leader - Ref. 173/2
Reports to: Fire Fighting Superintendent
Work Location: Balhaf

Main Responsibilities:

- Leads, conducts, controls and maintains fire brigade personnel and fire fighting and rescue operation readiness and activities at the LNG Plant in Balhaf and their plant support facilities
- Plans and coordinates the testing, inspection and maintenance of all fire protection system & fire fighting equipment
- Assesses anomalies or deficiencies identified to increase the reliability and integrity of the fire protection systems and fire fighting equipment
- Conducts FIFI Training sessions as and when required, training subordinates and other Yemen LNG personnel

Qualifications Required:

- Diploma II in a Fire Safety / technical discipline or equivalent
- 6 years experienced in specific Fire Protection System & Fire Fighting Equipment maintenance and test in the oil / gas refining or Petrochemical industry
- High level of knowledge on fire and rescue specialized on industrial fire service or internationally recognized Fire Service qualification
- Personnel management skills
- Working knowledge of computer applications and methods

Job Title: Safety Supervisor - Ref. 172/2
Reports to: Safety Superintendent
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Reporting to the Safety Superintendent ensures that Yemen LNG HSE policies and regulations are implemented within the 38" pipeline, Balhaf LNG plant and marine facilities
- Contributes to ensuring that Yemen LNG operated facilities are a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and contractors
- Ensures that potential risks that could harm, restrict or terminate Company operations are well identified and that corrective plans to minimize these potential risks are developed and implemented
- Participates in Incident Investigation and Reporting for Yemen LNG operated facilities. Assists, organizes and participates in Risk Analysis, Operational Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Qualifications Required:

- Bachelor's Degree in Engineering and extensive HSE courses at university level and/or industrial training centers
- Minimum of 10 years experience in Operations in gas industry with at least 3 years of those in supervisory HSE position ideally in an LNG plant
- Experience in risk assessment techniques (Hazop, Hazan, Fault Tree, Cause Tree, What if, etc.)
- Leadership, professionalism, common sense and ability to communicate and promote dialogue, to resolve potential impasses or conflicts
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Good Knowledge of Microsoft Applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Visit Yemen LNG's website at (WWW.YEMENLNG.COM).
- Go to Careers, then to Vacancies to enter our Web Application System.
- Register your personal and professional data in order to log in and apply, mentioning the title and the reference number of the position you are applying for.
- Do not make duplicate applications by fax, etc.
- Yemen LNG Company will contact the selected candidates for interview and further assessment.
- Applicants who are not contacted have not been successful but can still apply for future positions.

Closing Date: 4 February 2009

WWW.YEMENLNG.COM

Putting the devil in the bin

By: Alice Hackman

Jihad, 10, and her family traveled by bus from Sana'a to Taiz for Eid. Along the way, she had a sandwich and juice. When she had finished, she put the sandwich's wrapping and juice carton in a plastic bag, tied it up and deposited the bag in a garbage can at the next stop.

"Cleanliness is of belief and dirtiness is of the devil," says the bright little girl.

On a windy day, Jihad can see plastic bags flying in the wind from her window at home. "I don't like it," she says. "The devil flies in them because the devil is dirty."

Jihad, unfortunately, is fighting a lonely battle. Empty cans and wrappers litter the streets of Sana'a, sometimes piling up in residential areas, yet few seem intent on making a difference. Mounds of refuse are not only a blemish on the face of the city, but are a breeding ground for bacteria and a source of unpleasant smell.

Jihad is a pupil at the Al-Dhalami governmental school in Hadda, Sana'a. Bright blue bins dot the four corners of the school's earth playground and educational posters are stretched across the walls of the classrooms surrounding it. One explains to children that plastic is non-biodegradable because "it will keep its shape for dozens of years". Another shows children playing in a clean park with a bright blue dustbin in its corner.

Every day in the city in which Jihad lives, a man casually tosses a qat plastic bag out of a minibus window. A child on his way to school loiters at a street corner sipping an orange juice before throwing the empty plastic cup and straw down onto the pavement and darting off to class. And somewhere on the third floor of an office building,



"Pollution" strikes a fatal blow to "the beautiful environment", by a young friend of the environment

someone opens a window and flings a paper wrapper down onto the road below.

"In grades five and sixth, there is nothing in the curriculum about things being biodegradable," says Nojoom Ahmed, 35, science teacher at Jihad's school. "Carbon dioxide pollution is on the program, but plastic pollution is not."

Instead the school's teachers encourage their pupils to clean the courtyard whenever they have a free period and encourage cleanliness in class to develop the children's environmental awareness. The school has also organized several clean-up excursions outside the school.

"Teaching children to be clean has to come from the family," she says, "but

if it can't, then education is important."

"The parents, school and government are equally important in educating children about the environment," agrees Sadek Al-Osaimi, general secretary for the non-governmental Yemeni Association for Awareness and Environment Protection.

Al-Osaimi, who encourages initiatives similar to that in Jihad's school,

has recently launched a pilot project to spread awareness about the importance of protecting the environment in 13 other governmental schools in Sana'a. As part of the scheme, the association trains senior teachers to teach small groups of 25 to 35 students, called "friends of the environment", who in turn spread their knowledge to their friends, younger pupils and members of their community. The results have been very positive.

The project is an ambitious one and has to be carried out in steps. First, pupils are encouraged to put rubbish in the right place to clean up the school, and then only do they learn the difference between biodegradable and non-biodegradable rubbish. Throughout the program, pupils who come late to class are asked to clean the school. This is doubly effective, as neither they nor their friends will litter the courtyard again knowing who might have to pick it up.

"If there is continuous follow-up, there will be progress," says Al-Osaimi, whose association also aims to teach children about the ozone layer and biodiversity so that they can better appreciate and take care of the environment they live in.

Long term, it aims to change thinking in the community through imbuing a sense of collective responsibility into its members and changing outdated attitudes towards the environment.

"Some tribal men think that if you put rubbish in the bin, you are not a man," says Rima Shuja' Al-Din, 27, English teacher from Sana'a. "I've heard it with my own ears."

"We educate children for the future," says Al-Osaimi. "Twenty five percent of the Yemeni population is in school: If we succeed with 30 percent of pupils only, it will be an improvement."

The "friends of the environment" project does not only educate the gen-

4U

Seven small things you can do to help protect the environment

- ¥ Use the blue municipality dustbins
- ¥ Send an e-mail to yaaep@yemen.net.ye and join in one of the association's clean-up or awareness-raising activities
- ¥ Walk or use public transport to and from work to reduce carbon emissions
- ¥ Carry your groceries in a canvas bag or Bab Al-Yemen rice sack instead of endless plastic bags
- ¥ Use reusable containers to store food instead of cling film and aluminum foil
- ¥ Take non-disposable plates and cutlery on picnics
- ¥ Print on both sides of paper

eration of the future. Al-Osaimi hopes that children in targeted schools will go home and tell their parents about what they have learnt, encouraging the older generation to follow suit and to use environmentally-friendly light bulbs and refrigerators for example.

"If we succeed in changing a student's attitude [towards the environment] directly, he will indirectly report what he learns to his parents," he explains.

The cost of following the "friends of the environment" project for each school is no more than YR 25,000 a year, estimates Al-Osaimi, who hopes that the project's success will encourage the Ministry of Education to support the project by printing its guidelines and distributing them to other governmental schools in Sana'a and eventually all over Yemen.

"If everyone cleans in front of their house, everywhere will be clean," says Jihad.

Innocent and cute, but dangerous

By: Enas Ahmed Al-Awami

Scientifically known as the *Felis Catus*, the cat is a small predatory carnivorous mammal that is valued by humans for its companionship and its aptitude to hunt snakes, scorpions and rats. It has been a pet to humans for at least 9,500 years.

The National Geographic cites the presence of cats in over 600 million in homes all over the world. Although it is the most popular pet, it can pose a lot of dangers to humans, especially pregnant women.

With highly advanced senses, the cat is a skilled predator, known to hunt over 1,000 species for food. But cats that are domesticated must be well taken care of and properly fed, or they can become aggressive.

"Dry food is fine as long as it is complete and balanced, but feeding your cat fresh

food might be healthier," says Dr. Rasheed Al-Morshedim, a veterinary surgeon. "Although fish is the most preferable food for cats, its small sharp bones can be deadly for cats so, for safety, feed your pet another type of protein such as cooked chicken."

"Before you own the cat, make sure that it is vaccinated against diseases that might kill it," he stresses.

There are at least two veterinary clinics and more than eight animal pharmacies around Sana'a, according to Dr. Sameh Mohammed, a vet in Sana'a.

Infections in humans

Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis, also known as *Toxoplasma*, is the most common cat infection and can threaten the health of an unborn child. Most cats that become infected with toxoplasmosis show no clinical evidence of the disease and there is no vaccine on the market to immunize cats or other animals against the infection.

It is caused by a parasite called *Toxoplasma gondii*. The parasite multiplies in the intestine of cats and is shed in cat feces, mainly into litter boxes and

garden soil.

"Toxoplasma parasite is the most common disease a cat can transmit to a human," says Dr. Mohammad, "Homemakers or the person who owns a cat should be careful when cleaning a cat's litter box, because parasites live there. Children can be harmed by cats if their family doesn't take good care, and children can get rabies," says Dr. Mohammad.

Healthy adults usually do not suffer ill effects from toxoplasmosis and many times do not have enough symptoms to suggest infection. Symptoms are rare, but can resemble the flu. However, if you become infected while pregnant, your unborn child may also become infected.

Infected babies may not develop any disease, or they may become very ill, with serious damage to the brain and eyes.

Generally, if you have been infected with *Toxoplasma* before becoming pregnant your unborn child is protected by your immunity. Some experts suggest waiting for 6 months after a recent infection before becoming pregnant. The infection will not be active when you become pregnant, and so there is rarely a risk to your baby.

Feline Immunodeficiency virus or Fel V

The Fel V virus lives in the cat's saliva, nose discharges, and in lower concentrations in its urine as well. The virus is relatively unstable and cannot live outside an infected cat for more than a few hours in a dry environment.

Cat bites can be a source of infection. The virus is carried in the cat's saliva of the infected cat and is introduced into the tissue of the recipient. Cats that are housed closely together and share food or water dishes are also at risk. Infected pregnant cats may transmit the virus to their kittens.

Cat-scratch disease

This is an infection caused by bacteria carried in cat saliva. You can get it from a cat scratch or bite. An infection can develop after a cat scratches you if the

cat's paws have the bacteria on them.

The bacteria can also transfer to the cat's paws when it licks itself. With a cat bite, the cat can pass the bacteria to a human via its saliva. An owner can also get an eye infection by stroking a cat with bacteria in its fur then rubbing his or her eyes. Many people who suffer from "cat-scratch disease" do not remember being scratched or bitten by a cat.

A human can come into contact with the parasite when handling cat litter or soil containing cat feces.

How to protect your and your cat's health

Although scientific research may eventually discover a cure for this disease, preventing infection is the best way to protect a cat.

Controlling exposure to other cats by keeping her indoors, having the cat vaccinated if he or she comes in contact with other cats, especially stray cats, testing all new cats adopted or bought before they are brought home, and keeping the cat's environment clean will all help to prevent the disease.

If you are pregnant, ask another family member to change the cat litter box and then disinfect it with boiling water for 5 minutes. If you must change the litter box yourself, wear rubber gloves to avoid contact with the litter and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.

Toxoplasmosis and Yemeni women

In each six women, five can be infected by toxoplasmosis, according to the last health statistics in Yemen.

Any woman who owns a cat can catch toxoplasmosis if she is not careful or if she doesn't know about feline infections.

Rajaa Al-Shami, a homemaker and mother of three girls and two boys, never heard about cat diseases but she had never owned a cat.

"Cats seem scary to me: I like dogs more than cats and I just knew that it carries viruses sometimes and that's a good reason to stay further away from them," she said.



Some Yemenis are superstitious when it comes to cats and feel that they are disgusting animals. "I never had a cat: I have always known that cats bring me bad luck and could cause disease," said Yosra Mogbel, a teacher and mother of two boys.

Although some families really hate cats, others like them. Om Asaad, homemaker and mother of three said, "I love cats and I own six of them. I feed them every day, wash them every week and I never had an infection: they're like angels."

"My sister once had toxoplasmosis when she was pregnant and she couldn't have babies until she had injections," said Rasha'a Abdulrahman, 22, member of a family of five. "Since then, I have never liked cats or even thought of owning any pet in case it is harmful."

Om Ahmed, a housewife and mother of four, loves cats and fish: "I once had a cat and rabbits in my yard, but my little girl got an eye infection so I got rid of all our pets."

Medical opinion

Dr. Azizah Karman, a gynecologist in the Science and Technology Hospital, confirms that there is a cat disease called *Toxoplasma* which is transmitted to humans via a cat's saliva which carries the parasite. The parasite lives in the placenta inside the infected women, but she won't know until she becomes pregnant.

"We can't know that the woman is infected with toxoplasmosis until we see results from a blood test. The parasite can cause repeated abortion or deformation of the fetus," she said, "The affected person can be cured if she takes a Spisramycin injection for 21 days."

"After one attack from the parasite the body directly creates immunity against

the parasite so you can't have it twice," she observed.

Finally, Dr. Karman advises women to be careful and to try to keep pets out of the house, also to go for regular medical check-ups to be on the safe side. Toxoplasmosis can

also affect children and turn them blind, according to Dr. Amat-Alkareem Hammad, gynecologist. The parasite can also be transmitted via other animals like sheep, cows and goats.

"For protection, you must avoid eating raw or undercooked meat and unwashed fruit and vegetables," she said. "Make sure to wash your hands thoroughly before you eat and after handling raw meat, soil, sand or cats, and be careful to not rub your eyes or face when preparing food, and wipe the counter clean afterwards," she added.

"If you don't have a cat you also can get infected by *Toxoplasma*, and that all because of pollution," she said. "Your car might run over cat's feces in the street and carry the parasite into your yard. It may then be carried into your house."

"Make sure to get an injection against the parasite. When you next go for a check up, it will appear that you have developed an antibody against it," she concluded.



1. Maintenance Scada Technician Position # 751, 753 & 754 @ CPF & Scada/ Instrument Technician Position #27-6 @ Terminal

Job duties

- Installs, repairs, calibrates, trouble shoots configures and maintains all Regulatory Control Systems within the plant facility. Performs Preventative and Corrective maintenance on Process Control equipment, PLC and Data Acquisition Systems in accordance with manufacturers and Maintenance department accepted industrial standards. Updates documentation related to Process Control Systems to ensure current data accuracy. Analyzes Process Control Systems and where applicable recommends and or implements improvements. Includes use of hand-tools and test equipment such as data monitors, transmission testers, voltmeter, ohmmeter etc.
- Provides on-the-job training to SCADA/Instrument technicians in any of the areas covered above.
- As required, trouble shoots and repairs other equipment including but not limited to field instrumentation, office equipment, fire/gas detection systems etc. within the scope of technician's skill and training.
- Carries out similar or related duties and preventive maintenance work as deemed necessary to support the plant's activities, monitors and ensures EH&S policies and procedures are followed.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of secondary (Technical) education (12 years) followed by at least 2 years' full-time formal training and 6 years of related experience. Preferably certified to Technologist standard (CET).
- Successful completion of the Instrument Skills ladder and a minimum of 2 years post-FIQ Instrument experience. Completion of 2 years SCADA skills ladder or related experience.
- Excellent knowledge of English (written and oral) and able to produce technical reports.
- Valid Yemen driving license

2. ESP Technician Position # 2107, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923 & 924 @ CPF:

Job duties

- Installs, maintains, repairs and diagnoses trouble in the Driver systems or electrical equipment on well site equipment.
- Participates in planned and preventative maintenance programs and breakdown work. Includes checking, adjusting and diagnosing equipment malfunctions and taking corrective action. Utilizes specialized measuring and testing instruments such as but not limited to, voltmeters, ammeters, and meggers etc. Makes standard assessments relating to load requirements of electrical equipment. Plans and lays out certain work from blueprints, sketches, wiring. Assembles, disassembles and completely overhauls electrical motors, drives, generators, etc. Modifies or reconditions parts and fits manufacturers' spares on electrical circuits, motors and switchgear.
- Authorized for electrical isolations on Variable Speed Drive applications up to and including 5 KV
- Carries out other similar or related duties such as providing on the job instruction to trainees and coordinating work activities of labour contractors.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of secondary (Technical) education (12 years) followed by 2 years' full-time formal training in ESP trades and 6 years of related experience.
- Successful completion of at least 95% of the items listed on the ESP Technician Skills Ladder.
- He will have completed Variable Speed Drive Courses and Submersible Pump Course.
- Fair Knowledge of English
- Valid Yemeni Driving License

3. Electrical Technician Position # 335 & 0930 @ CPF/Terminal:

Job duties

- Installs, maintains, repairs and diagnoses trouble in the electrical systems or electrical equipment. Includes troubleshooting motors, wiring, power supplies (Wartsila, Caterpillar diesel engines and Solar turbines), well site equipment, 69/13.8kv overhead line network, switchgear, power generation control and protection equipment.
- Participates in planned and preventative maintenance programs and breakdown work. Includes checking, adjusting and diagnosing equipment malfunctions and taking corrective action. Utilizes specialized measuring and testing instruments such as but not limited to, voltmeters, ammeters, and meggers etc. Makes standard assessments relating to load requirements of wiring or electrical equipment. Plans and lays out certain work from

- blueprints, sketches, wiring. Assembles, disassembles and completely overhauls electric motors, drives, pumps, switchgear, generators, etc. Modifies or reconditions parts and fits manufacturers' spares on electrical circuits, motors and switchgear.
- Connects and disconnects high voltage electrical power supplies up to 69kv after area has been isolated by Electrical Foreman. Authorized for electrical isolations and issuing electrical isolation permits up to 480 volts.
 - Carries out other similar or related duties such as providing on the job instruction to trainees and coordinating work activities of labour contractors.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of secondary (Technical) education (12 years) followed by 2 years' full-time formal training in electrical trades and 6 years of related experience.
- Successful completion of at least 95% of the items listed on the Electrical Technician Skills Ladder.
- Fair knowledge of English.
- Valid Yemen driving license.

4. Machinist Position # 918 @ CPF/ Terminal:

Job duties

- Fabricates parts in the shop as requested by various departments at the CPF. Uses machinery such as lathes, milling machines, surface grinders, bending machines, press brakes and other equipment.
- Carries out planned maintenance according to work orders. Ensures that a work order is completed correctly. Includes listing the nature and location of the problem and the parts required, and upon completion, detailing the materials used for the repair and the duration of the job. Maintains record of maintenance performed for future reference and possible replication.
- Maintains all equipment in the machine shop. Includes preventative maintenance servicing to all drills, taps, dies, etc. according to manufacturers' specifications.
- Carries out other similar or related duties such as advising on the use of ferrous and non-ferrous materials.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of Secondary education followed by 3 years' full time training in machinist trades.
- 5 years' experience in machine shop.
- Good knowledge of English.

5. Mechanical Technician Position # 170 @ CPF/ Terminal:

Job duties

- Overhauls diesel engines. Includes overhauling Caterpillar, Wartsila Ruston and other types of diesel generators, and commissioning same. Performs work from drawings, and diagrams, includes both operational and Maintenance manuals, to manufacturer's, and other specifications. Disassembles equipment using hoists, hand tools and power tools. Determines nature of repair and examines parts to detect problems, uses measuring tools such as calipers, micrometers and other instruments to determine correct tolerances
- Services generator/Pump drivers. Includes changing oil and lubricants, topping up, lubricating, testing coolants etc. in accordance with planned procedures.
- Carries out daily inspections of solar turbines and generators and Includes changing fuel nozzles, repairing leaks, changing fuel and air filters and lubricating oil cooler fan system. Shipping/Mainline Pumps Fire Water Pumps and Systems.
- Repairs and carries out major overhauls on mechanical pumps. Changes mechanical seals, as required. Makes a repair by replacing, reworking, or refinishing worn or damaged parts. Makes adjustments to functional parts of equipment using hand tools, and specialized equipment. Reassembles equipment and tests performance. Carries out services and inspections on all types of Valves including ball valves gate vaves and specilised valves associated with tankage
- Carries out planned maintenance on all of the above plant and equipment. Includes checking fluid levels, checking for leaks in mechanical seals as necessary, taking vibration readings, checking for abnormal noises, and performing quarterly alignment checks.
- Carries out other similar or related duties such as giving on the job instruction to trainees, and overhauling reciprocating gas compressors.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of secondary (Technical) education (12 years) followed by 2 years' full-time formal training in mechanical trades and 6 years of related experience.
- Successful completion of at least 95% of the items listed on the Mechanical Technician Skills Ladder.
- Fair knowledge of English.

• To Apply for this Job please apply to: recruiting_yemsana@nexeninc.com. Applications should be submitted NO later than February 8th, 2009
• Faxed applications will not be considered. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

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ت: ٢٤٠٢٠٧ - فاكس: ٢٦٨٠٤١

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From Damascus to Ashkelon to Qahera

The transfer of the Sacred Head of Husain ibn Ali

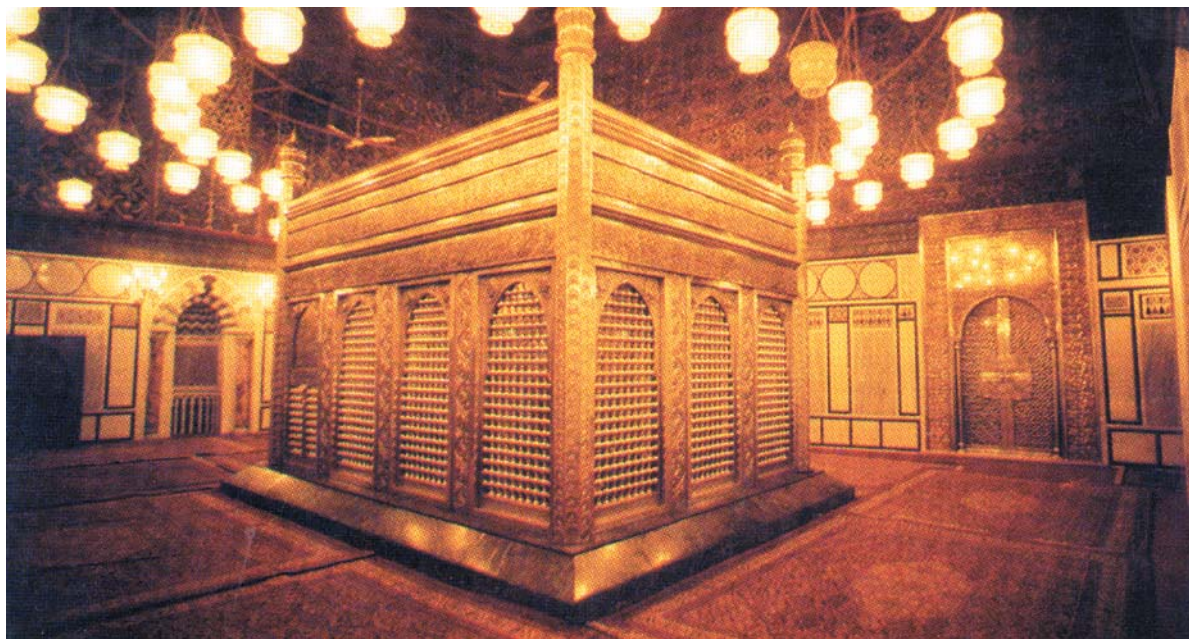
By: Qazi Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhany
qazishkborhany@hotmail.com

The most beloved grandson of *Rasulullah(S)*, Al Imam al Husain ibn Ali (d. 61/680, Karbala, Iraq), along with his Seventy-two selected relatives and companions, was brutally massacred on the soil of Karbala, in Iraq, on 10th of Muharram 61/680 by the orders of Yazid bin Mu'awiyah (d. 64/683, Damascus, Syria), the second Umayyad ruler. On the second day after this great tragedy, the barbaric forces of Yazid raised the Sacred Head of the Imam on a lance.

In such a shocking manner, the Umayyads exhibited the Sacred Head to establish their so called victory, and took it to Kufa to present it before Ibn Ziyad, the notorious and ruthless governor of Kufa, leaving behind the mutilated body of the grandson of the *Rasulullah(S)*. The headless body was thus buried there by the tribe of Banu Asad, who were living in the vicinity of Karbala. After the exhibition and display of the Head of Abi Abdillah al Imam al Husain, Ibn Ziyad dispatched it to Damascus to be presented to Yazid as a trophy of so-called victory and also to prove that the order of the ruler was successfully accomplished. Yazid celebrated the occasion with great pomp and show by displaying the Head of the Imam in his crowded and decorated court. The Head of the Great-son of *Rasulullah(S)* was then buried in a niche of one of the internal walls of *Jame-Masjid*, Damascus, Syria. Afterwards, the Sacred Head of Imam Husain remained confiscated and confined in Damascus by the order of the Umayyad monarch, Suleyman bin Abd al Malik (d. 86/705, Damascus, Syria), in this condition for two hundred forty years, till 365 (A.H).

When the Abbasids snatched power from the Umayyads, in the garb of taking revenge of *Ahl al Bait*, they also confiscated the sacred Head of Imam and proved to be worst enemies than the Umayyads. From Abul Abbas al Saffah, the first Abbasid monarch till the fall of the Abbasid dynasty, all of them proved to great enemies and prosecutors of *Ahl al Bait* and their devotees. It was the Abbasid emperor al Muqtadar Billah (d.295/908) who confirmed himself as the bitterest enemy of *Ahl al Bait*. He showed his utmost hatred with Imam Husain, and attempted many times to stop the pilgrimage to the Sacred Head, but in vain. He thus tried to completely eliminate the sign of the sacred place of *Ziyarat*; he transferred the Sacred Head of Imam Husain to Ashkelon (presently occupied by Israel) in secrecy, so that the pilgrims could not find the place. 'Batsheva Sobelmann' observes: "Sunni (it would have been better if the writer had used: 'Abbasids', instead of Sunni, because majority of the Sunni-Muslims, also loved the *Ahl al Bait*). The rulers displeased with the phenomenon, decided to relocate Husain's Head to the far edge of the Kingdom — Ashkelon, (Israel)". Ashkelon is located about 6 miles (10 kilometres) from the Gaza strip and 36 miles (58 kilometres) south of Tel Aviv.

Legendary commander of the Fatimi forces, eminent writer, statesman and *Dai* of high caliber, Syedna



Maqsurah Raas al Husain ibn Ali, Qahera.

Badrul'jamali (d.487/1095) conquered Palestine, during the period of 18th Fatemi Imam Maad al Mustansir (d.487/1094, Qahera, Egypt). The Fatemi Imam assigned him to discover the Sacred Head of the Imam Husain ibn Ali. The *Dai*, in 448(A.H) discovered the place of Raas al Imam al Husain with the help of Imam's blessings. The Sacred Head was put on a plate, and placed in a casket. This historical event took place in 448 (A.H).

Under the instructions of the Fatemi Imam Mustansir, Syedna Badrul'jamali constructed a *Masjid* and donated several huge properties to meet the expenditure of the 'Trust', so as to maintain the affairs of the *Mashad*. He also prepared a beautiful traditional wooden *Minbar-pulpit* and placed it in the *Masjid*, where Raas al Imam al Husain was buried. This *Minbar* bears the historical account which is engraved in *Arabi Fatemi Kufi* script about the Raas al Imam al Husain, which convincingly provides an evidence of its historical authenticity. Afterwards, the 20th Fatemi Imam Mansur al A'amir (d.526/1132, Qahera, Egypt) sent beautiful precious lamps, made of gold and silver, for this *Mashad*. Celebrated historian and traveler, Ibn Khalik'an (d. d.681/1282, Damascus, Syria) and Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Batutah(d. in between 1368-1377, Morocco) admitted the authenticity of the burial place of Raas al Husain in Ashkelon.

Under the instruction of Salahuddin Ayyubi (d.1194, Damascus) this *Minbar* was transferred to the *Masjid* at 'Kahalil al Rahman', which is twelve miles distance from Bait al Maqdis. The gate of this *Masjid* was constructed sometime during the era of the 11th Fatemi Imam Abdullah al Mahdi (d.322/934, Mahdiyyah, Tunisia). 'Mashad al Khalil' is a famous sacred place of the town: 'Kahalil al Rahman, where the graves of Ibrahim Khalilullah (A.S), his wife Syeda Sarah, his son Ishaq (A.S), and his wife Syeda Rifqah, Yaqub (A.S), also known as 'Israel', and his wife Syeda Laiqah, and Yusuf (A.S) is a place of peace and reverence. Muslims, Jews and Christians devotees from across the boundaries of the world come here daily for *Ziyarat*. *Hujjat al Jazirah* of Khuras'an & Badakhsh'an, Syedna Nasir Khusraw (d.481, Yangan) has mentioned 'Mashad al Khalil' in his cel-

ebrated "Safarnamah" as follow:

"It is also known as *Jabrun, Jabrin, Jabri and Matlun*. This place is located on the north of *Bait al Lehama*".

He (Syedna Badrul'jamali) constructed this building from its foundations and acquired properties (as a trust), the revenue from which is to be spent only on this *Mashad* and its custodians. This trust is functional from today and for days to come till the day Allah will inherit the earth and all that is upon it. And He has spent in the above mentioned expenditures from what Allah had given him through *Halal*, and pure of his earnings. This all has been done in the way of Allah to attain His happiness and reward, and to publicly glorify the lofted place of this Imam, as *Qur'an* says:

"Surely *Masajid* of Allah shall be erected by those who believe in Allah and believe in the last day, and he offers *Sal'at* and pays *Zak'at* and is afraid of none but Allah".

During the period of Salahuddin Ayyubi, and by his order, the *Minbar* was transferred from Ashkelon to the *Masjid* Khalil al Rahman (Israel). The 51st *Dai* al Fatemi, Dr. Syedna Taher Saifuddin (d.1385/1965, Mumbai, India) got the honour to visit *Masjid* Khalil al Rahman, and he discovered the *Fatemi Minbar*, one thousand years after the *Satar-seclusion* of the Fatemi Imams.

Famous historian Taqiuddin al Muqrezi briefly narrates the account regarding the transfer of Raas al Imam al Husain. In *Shab'an*, 491 (A.H) = 1098 (A.D.), *Fatemi Dai* and Minister, Shahansha Afzal (d.515/1121), Commander of the Fatemi Forces and son of Syedna Badrul'jamali, under the instructions of the 19th Fatemi Imam Ahmad al Musta'ali (d.495/1101, Qahera, Egypt), marched towards Bait al Maqdis to conquer it. During that era Bait al Maqdis was controlled by the Turks. *Dai Afzal* contacted them and tried each method to avoid bloodshed, but in vain. The Commander of the Fatemi forces could not tolerate this negative attitude of the Turks and he attacked them. Due to heavy artillery fire of "*Manjiniq*", many parts of the city were damaged, which forced the Turks to hand over the city. *Dai Afzal* handled the Turks rulers with great diplomacy; he honoured them, presented them gifts and allowed them to leave the city peacefully. After capturing Palestine, *Dai Shahansha Afzal* proceeded towards Ashkelon and finally entered the city, where he learnt about an old house, which was in a deplorable condition. It was the place where the Sacred Head of Imam Husain was buried. *Dai Afzal* took the Sacred Head from the casket, perfumed it, and put in another valuable casket. He bought a beautiful Villa and transferred the Sacred Head there. Afterwards he paid attention towards completion of the *Mashad*, which was started by his father Syedna Badrul'jamali, as the historians admitted. *Dai Afzal* took out the Raas al Imam al Husain and embraced it with his chest and walked bare footedly towards that *Mashad*, where it was

reburied with great honour and reverence. In this manner the Raas al Imam al Husain remained buried in the same *Mashad*.

After 21st Fatemi Imam, Tayyab Abulqasim went in to *Satar-seclusion*, his uncle, Abd al Majid was appointed "Regent" only to handle the affairs of the empire, occupied the throne of the Fatemi Empire. Fearing disrespect and the atrocities of the traitors and enemies, the Majidi-monarch, Zafir who is wrongly addressed as 'Fatemi', ordered for the transfer of the Sacred Head to Qahera. The *W'ali* of the city of Ashkelon, Al Amir Sayf al Mamlaka Tamim along with the custodian of the *Mashad*, Qazi Mohammad bin Miskin, took out the buried casket of Raas al Imam al Husain from the *Mashad*, and with due respect and great reverence, on Sunday 8th *Jumadil Ukhra*, 548 (31st August 1153) carried the Sacred Head from the city of Ashkelon to Al Moizziyat al Qahera, Egypt. [6] Syedi Hasan bin Asad (Hir'az, Yemen) discussed this event in his "Risalah" as follows:

When the Raas al Imam al Husain was taken out of the casket, in Ashkelon, drops of the fresh blood were visible on the Raas al Imam al Husain and the fragrance of Musk spread all over.

Historians, al Muqrezi, al Qalaq'shandi, & Ibn Muyassar (d.1278) have mentioned that the casket reached Al Moizziyat al Qahera on Tuesday 10th *Jumadil Ukhra* (2nd September 1153). Ust'ad Maknun accompanied it in one of the service boats which landed at the Kafuri (Garden). For security reasons, and due to fear of atrocities of the enemies, the Sacred Head was passed on by the *Sird'ab* (underground passage) of 'Al Qasar al Sharqi al Kabir', and buried there in the section known "Qubbat al Daylam or Turbat al Zafr'an". This place is currently known as "Al Mashad al Husain", wherein lie buried underground thirteen Fatemi Imams (From 9th Fatemi Imam Ahmad al Mastur to 20th Fatemi Imam al A'amir). On the upper portion, *Tabarruk'at* of *Rasulullah(S)*, a manuscript of *Qur'an*, attributed to *Amir al Mumineen*, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and many other sacred valuables are preserved. This place is also known as "B'ab Makhallif'at al Rasul", whose literal meaning is 'Door of Remaining Parts of *Rasul(S)*'.

Historians record the reason of transfer of Raas al Imam al Husain with reference to another account as follows: "when the minister of al Zafir (d.544/1149), Sualeh Talai bin Ruzaik (d.556/1161), observed the atrocities of the Crusaders in Syria, he realized that for security reasons, the Sacred Head of Husain ibn Ali should be transferred to Al Moizziyat al Qahera, Egypt. For this purpose, he specially constructed a *Masjid* near "B'ab al Zawilah", as a proposed burial site of the "Raas al Imam al Husain". It was transferred from "B'ab al Faradis"-Ashkelon to Al Moizziyat al Qahera and it was placed inside the *Masjid* for a temporary period, but it was buried finally at "Turbat al

Zafr'an". All the rituals of burial were observed with great reverence. As per another account, some members of the Court built the *Mashad* with high quality stones and this work was completed sometime in 549 (A.H).

During the golden era of Aimmat Fatemiyeen, on the day of *Aashurah*, every year the people of Egypt from far and near used to gather and offer sacrifices of camels, cows, goats in the name of Allah, recite *Marsiya-elegies* and pronounced *L'anat* loudly on Yazid, Shimar, Ibn Ziyad and other murderers of Imam Husain, the *Ahl al Bait* and the *Ans'ar* of Husain. During the tenure of Salahuddin Ayyubi all *Marasim al Az'a* or mourning commemorations for Imam Husain were declared officially banned. Salahuddin Ayyubi had no regard for the *Ahl al Bait*, as he declared 10th Muharram, *Yaume Aashurah* as a day of joy and happiness. All necessary arrangements for fun and festivities on the day were made. Whatever he did to eliminate the love of *Ahl al Bait* from the minds of the people of his vast domain was unfruitful. All his malicious efforts were in vain. The sweet memories left behind by the *Ahl al Bait* did not leave the hearts of the people of Egypt, by force too. The reason for this was the

were greatly astounded further when they saw, on removing the cap, the Centipedes were dead. Salahuddin asked the nobleman to reveal the secret of this miracle. The nobleman revealed as follow: "When Raas al Imam al Husain was brought to *Qasar*, Al Moizziyat al Qahera, he had carried the casket on his head. 'O Salahuddin! This is the secret of my safety'".

Allah has granted the honour to make and fixed the *Maqsurah* at Raas al Imam al Husain to the 51st *Dai al Fatemi*, Dr.Syedna Taher Saifuddin(d.1965,Mumbai). On the night of his demise, photographs of the *Maqsurah* were presented to him, which showed completion of *Maqsurah* fixture. He was very happy to see the photographs of the *Zarih* and said:

"Inform the authorities that we are coming", (for inauguration).

On the same night he departed to the divine world to meet his Creator. His Successor, 52nd *Dai al Fatemi*, Dr. Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin fulfilled the wish of his illustrious father in his first journey to Al Moizziyat al Qahera.

The event of presentation of the *Maqsurah* is also unique in the history of loyalty and faithfulness. The



Burial-Place-of-the-Raas-al-Husain-ibn-Ali-Ashkelon, Israel.

Adal and the *Ahs'an* of the *Ahl al Bait* & the deep impressions and sweet fragrance, which they left forever.

Famous Mamluk historian of Egypt, Mohiyuddin Abd al Zahir (d. 1292) wrote that when Salahuddin came to power he seized all the Palaces of the Aimmat Fatemiyeen and looted their properties and treasures. He destroyed the valuable and rare collection of the hundred thousands books, available in libraries, in the river Nile. He tried to remove each signs of Bani Fatemah from the nook and corners of Egypt. When he learnt through his intelligence bureau that a nobleman (*Dai*), (one of the custodians of Raas al Imam al Husain) was highly respected by the people of Al Moizziyat al Qahera, he surmised that perhaps he would be aware of the *Khizain*-treasures of the Aimmat Fatemiyeen. Salahuddin issued orders to present him in his court. He inquired of him the whereabouts of the Fatemi *Khizain*-treasures. The nobleman flatly denied knowing anything about the treasures. Salahuddin was angered, and ordered his intelligence service to ask him through 'third-degree-torture', but the nobleman bore all the torture and repeated the same statement. Consequently, Salahuddin ordered his soldiers to put a cap containing Centipedes on the head of the nobleman. It is said, that such type of punishment was so severe and unbearable, and none could survive even for a few minutes.

Prior to putting the Cap of Centipedes on the head, his hair was shaved, to make it easy for the Centipedes to suck blood, which in turn made holes in skull. But! In spite of that punishment the noble custodian of Husain's Head, the *Dai* felt no pain at all. Salahuddin ordered for more Centipedes to be put on the head of the nobleman, but it could not kill or pain him. Finally Salahuddin Ayyubi ordered for a tight cap full of Centipedes to be put on the head of nobleman, to accomplish the result. Even this method could not torture or kill him. The Ayyubid Brutes

Maqsurah of Raas al Imam al Husain was originally constructed for *Mashad* of 'Sahib'il *Liwa'il Husain*', Syedi Abil Fazal al Abbas ibn Ali (d.61/680, Karbala, Iraq), at Karbala, Iraq, and it was manufactured at the very site which is now the resting place of the 51st *Dai al Fatemi*, Dr. Syedna Taher Saifuddin, located in India. This shrine is known as 'Ruzat Tahera', the only Shrine in the world where entire *Qur'an* is written inside the walls with pure-gold. When this *Maqsurah* reached at the *Mashad* of Syedi Abbas ibn Ali, Karbala, Iraq, it would not fit on the place. The size of the *Maqsurah* and the site of the fitting place differed at the time of fitting, although every technical aspects and measurements of the site were taken into account very precisely. The Engineers were astonished, as what had happened, although every minute detail was handled very professionally. The loyalty of Syedi Abbas was also witnessed on that day too, as it had been witnessed on the day of *Aashurah*. There a divine guidance came to the effect by way of intuition that a sincere, faithful, loyal and devoted brother could not tolerate, that the Head of *Rasulullah's* grandson, Husain, buried in Al Moizziyat al Qahera, Egypt, should be without a *Maqsurah*, thus how could he accept this gift for himself. Hence even after *Shahadat*, Syedi Abbas ibn Ali paid his tribute to his Moulou Husain and presented his own *Maqsurah* for Raas al Imam al Husain. When this above-mentioned *Maqsurah* was brought from Karbala, Iraq to Al Moizziyat al Qahera, Egypt, it fitted upon the original position of the grave known as *Mashad* of Raas al Imam al Husain in such a manner, as if it had been fabricated for Raas al Imam al Husain itself.

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NOTE

Israel destroyed more than 100 *Masajid* in Palestinian villages incorporated into the state, including the sacred place where the Head of Imam al Husain, the grandson of *Rasulullah(S)* was buried. Afterwards, Israel's legendary general Moshe Dayan—himself an avid amateur archaeologist—gave the order to blow up the *Masjid*, while he was a young Lieutenant Colonel. "Masjid Al Mashad al Husain" in Ashkelon dates back to the 11th century, and where tradition had it that the Head of Imam Husain was hidden. "Masjid Al Mashad al Husain" was blown up deliberately as part of a broader operation that included at least two additional *Masajid*, one in Yavneh and the other in the nearby Mediterranean city of Ashdod. Muslim pilgrims, both Shia and Sunni, visit the site. After July 1950, there was nothing left for them to visit: that's when the Israel Defense Forces blew up "Masjid Al Mashad al Husain". "Masjid al Mashad al Husain, the holy site in Ashkelon, was leveled in 1950, but the devotees of *Ahl al Bait* did not forgo it.

A few years ago, the 52nd *Dai al Fatemi*, Sultan Dr. Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin, Head of the 'Ismaili Musta'alavi Dawoodi Bohra' School, achieved blessings to build a beautiful marble platform, as per traditional Fatemi architectural design, at the site, on the ground of "Barzilai Hospital", and since then thousands of devotees have come across the boundaries of the global village there round the year to pay tribute to Moulou Husain.

National Troupe for Popular Arts to document local popular dance

By: Ola Al-Shami

The development of local performance arts should receive more encouragement and by the Ministry of Culture, stresses Ali Al-Mohamadi, chairman of the National Troupe for Popular Arts in Sana'a.

Al-Mohamadi is well informed on the state of local performance arts in Yemen. He is the first Yemeni to have graduated with a Masters of the Art in Ballet Choreography, and was the choreographer for dancing breaks in the Ramadan children's dance competition that has been running on Yemeni television for the past ten years. In 1985, he received a Masters of the Arts in Ballet Choreography from the Higher Institute for Culture in the former Soviet Union, and in 1998 he was awarded a diploma in Popular Arts from the Arts Academy in Cairo.

Ali Al-Mohamadi, who is an expert



third position in a competition in Bulgaria in 1990, and has since participated in shows in many countries including Oman, Algeria, Sudan, Egypt, Morocco, Japan, the U.S. and Dubai.

However, recently work has not been as abundant as in previous years:

to another in the Ministry of Culture trying to find support for this project of documenting local Yemeni dances for the past 15 years, but have received no practical response," says Al-Mohamadi.

Fifteen years ago, there were other bands that were active in Hadramout and Aden which have since disappeared. Al-Mohamadi regards this as being the direct result of people's indifference and the government's lack of support.

When Khalid Al-Rowaishan headed the Ministry of Culture, more attention was paid to the country's performing artists, he nevertheless adds.

In 2004, Sana'a was awarded as the Capital of Arabic Culture. Al-Mohamadi recalled the activities organized at the time with a smile and says, "Khalid Al-Rowaishan paid special attention to music, dance and other performance arts even after 2004. This was the golden period of one or two years for the local performance arts in Yemen in my opinion."

"The financial support provided to the artists and dancers during that period was of great effect on the quality of art produced during Al-Rowaishan's time," he adds.

But, says Al-Mohamadi, Yemen appears to be the only country that lacks a stage where to perform dances or plays: "The hall in which I train the dancers is too small and uncomfortable, and we don't have a local stage in Sana'a as it is not considered to be necessary to promote the arts."

Artists in Yemen face a lack of support in their endeavors as both official and non-official bodies ignore the value of arts and music in particular.

"There must be a root for studying music in Yemeni society, beginning in schools. We would certainly enrich the student's sensitivity if we had music as one of the main subjects taught in schools. Then, there are no institutes or even a faculty to study arts and music in Yemen. The government should take into consideration the absence of formal music education in Yemen which



at fusing professional ballet with traditional Yemeni dance, describes local performance arts as "dying".

"We have many genres of music and dance in Yemen. There are about 45 dances including as Al-Haqfah from Tihamah, Al-Ettah from Hadramout, Al-Bara'a from Sana'a, and Al-Lawah from Aden, and at least five sorts of music including Al-Sana'ani from Sana'a, Al-Yafi'i from Yafi', Al-Hadrami from Hadramout, Al-Lahji from Lahj and Al-Adani from Aden. But we don't really appreciate this heritage," he claims.

Arab and foreign researchers and historians agree that the Yemeni performance arts are among the oldest to appear in the South of Arabia. Based in the Cultural Center in Sana'a, the National Troupe for Popular Arts was established in 1975 as a man-only troupe. After the unification in 1990, some women were allowed to join but they could not perform regularly because they were not given adequate support to overcome social restrictions. Al-Mohamadi's band was awarded

"Performance art and musical performances are in decline and our troupe's activities have been affected. We now work on national occasions and this affects our productivity," Al-Mohamadi complains.

The troupe's singers and dancers are not accurate representatives of their rich music and dance heritage because they do not receive enough support to develop their skills, says Al-Mohamadi.

"The artist suffers and he is still ignored by the government. For example, it doesn't help artists financially so that they can produce better," he explains.

"Documenting the different kinds of dances in Yemen would certainly save local performance arts from dying out completely and accordingly save our cultural identity," he says.

The documenting process would require traveling to every governorate to record existing dances, costumes and musical instruments, but there are still obstacles to carrying the project out.

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